PS · PLAYSTATION 2 · N64 · DREAMCAST · HANDHELDS · ANIME · MUSIC · TOYS

GR CLOSEUP: KORN'S JONATHAN DAVIS TEST DRIVES THE PS2 AND DREAMCAST

gamers' Republic

ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE

GRANDIA II

グランディア

GAME ARTS' LATEST ROLE-PLAYING MASTERPIECE COMES HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

WE OPEN THE X FILES

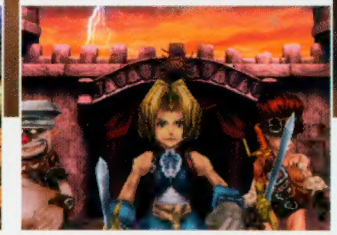
BEHIND THE SCENES AT MICROSOFT

THE HORROR: DINO CRISIS AND RESIDENT EVIL 2 & 3 ARRIVE FOR DREAMCAST

SHENMUE · METROPOLIS STREET RACER · ONIMUSHA · EVIL DEAD · BREATH OF FIRE IV
JET GRIND RADIO · SOUL REAVER 2 · SPACE RACE · SKY ODYSSEY · RED DOG · GRINCH

HEAVY METAL FAKK2

FINAL FANTASY IX



MDK2 ARMAGEDDON

- AN INTERVIEW WITH NINTENDO'S PERRIN KAPLAN, REALCAST V1
- ANIME, ACTION FIGURES, MUSIC, MOVIES AND MORE!

MILLENNIUM PUBLICATIONS INC

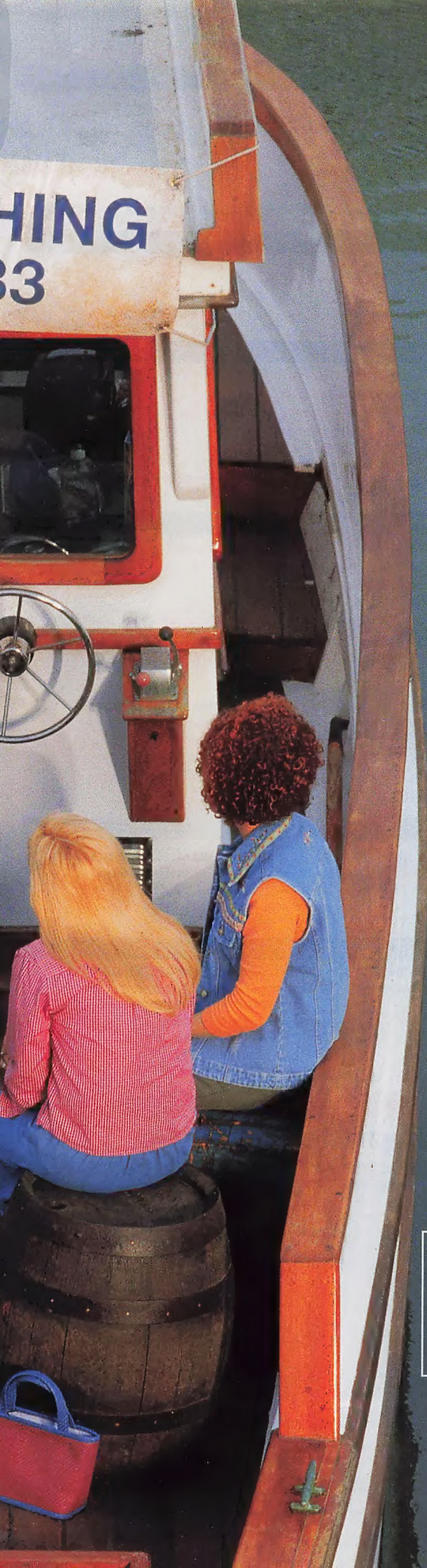
0 74851 08351 2 12

US $4.99 CANADA $6.99

WWW.GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM

ISSUE 31 | DECEMBER 2000

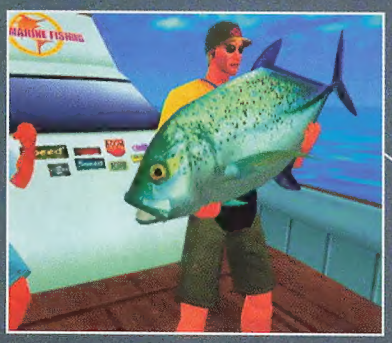
CHARTER FIS
PH: 555-26
Relax.
He'll find other work.



SEGA MARINE FISHING™

Rip some lip.

It's all in the wrist. You should be good at that.



You're the fishin' technician.

Poor Captain Jack. Thanks to Sega Marine Fishing, folks aren't lining up to pay top dollar to not catch fish on his tourist troller. Nope, seems all the smart fishermen are out on the Sega Sea matching wits with Sailfish, Tarpon, Blue Marlin, Tuna and Mako Shark. Any wonder things are a little slow down at the docks?

Dreamcast™

sega.com

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, Dreamcast, the Dreamcast logo, and Sega Marine Fishing are either registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA Enterprises, Ltd./AM/W Entertainment, Inc. or Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc. © SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD./AM/W Entertainment, Inc. and Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc., 2000. All Rights Reserved. www.sega.com.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

VOL. 3, NUMBER 6 • ISSUE #31 www.gamersrepublic.com

Gamers' Republic MANIFESTO

On October 25, for the third time, Americans camped in line, Japan style, to get their hands on a video-game console—and these were the longest lines yet. As I sat at home on PS2 eve, constant news flashes promoed the event. "Sony has a new video game out and it's the hottest thing this Christmas!" So they don't know exactly what it is, but Chuck Henry did his best anyway, and the PlayStation 2 hit with a bang. Even the launch party caught air time as the industry and a few brave celebs poured into L.A.'s Pacific Design Center for the big Sony bash and some hands-on PS2 gaming. Granted, a big reason for the lines was the limited availability of the console at launch, but, still, it's a rare occurrence that video games would catch such a large helping of the limelight, and something tells me this is only the beginning. One can only imagine what the Gamecube, Game Boy Advance and Xbox launches will bring. The video-game industry is way out of the closet and has finally become ingrained in our culture. Related action figures, soundtracks, and other merchandise are becoming as commonplace in America as they are in Japan. It's about time.

This holiday season in particular seems brimming with quality hardware and software no matter your age or whether you were lucky enough to nab a PS2, are currently enjoying the Dreamcast and SegaNet, or even if you're still playing the stalwart Nintendo 64. Banjo Tooie, Indiana Jones and perhaps Dinosaur Planet are all on track for this Christmas.

We're especially proud of this issue for many reasons: the Microsoft interviews, which will span two issues, are great; Korn's Jonathan Davis—who happens to be a really cool old-school gamer—gave us a candid interview; and it's packed with reviews, previews and some truly awesome layouts from our great design staff. Our apologies for the missing Fallout page this month: space got so tight we had to scrap it, but we're piling up your PS2 comments and other queries for a spread in January. See you then, and have a safe and happy holiday.

(C) GameArts Co.,Ltd./Illustration by Youshi Kanoe

DECEMBER 2000

gamers' Republic ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY:
MILLENNIUM PUBLICATIONS INC.

EDITORIAL

PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Dave Halverson » dhalverson@gamersrepublic.com
EXECUTIVE EDITOR Brady Fiechter » bfiechter@gamersrepublic.com
SENIOR EDITOR Michael Hobbs » mhobbs@gamersrepublic.com
SPORTS EDITOR Michael "Pooch" Puccini » mpuccini@gamersrepublic.com
STAFF EDITOR Chris Hoffman » choffman@gamersrepublic.com
STAFF EDITOR Tom Stratton » tstratton@gamersrepublic.com
EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS Christina Alexander, Shola Akinnuso, Jun Sakai, Tatsuki Miura, Steve Thomason

DESIGN

DESIGNER Henry Pan » hpan@gamersrepublic.com
DESIGNER Steve Dempster » sdempster@gamersrepublic.com
DESIGNER Nelson Lui » nlui@gamersrepublic.com
PRODUCTION MANAGER Robert Elmquist » belmquist@gamersrepublic.com
ONLINE DESIGNER Jun Sakai » jsakai@gamersrepublic.com

INTERNET: www.gamersrepublic.com

INTERNET DIRECTOR Michael Sasaki » michael@gamersrepublic.com
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Shola Akinnuso » sakinnuso@gamersrepublic.com
MANAGING EDITOR Michael "Pooch" Puccini » mpuccini@gamersrepublic.com
STAFF EDITOR Steve Thomason » sthomason@gamersrepublic.com
STAFF EDITOR Christina Alexander » calexander@gamersrepublic.com
JAPANESE EDITOR Jun Sakai » jsakai@gamersrepublic.com
JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT Tatsuki Miura » tmiura@gamersrepublic.com

MILLENNIUM CORPORATE • 818.889.4372

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CFO Barry Barone » bbarone@gamersrepublic.com
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Julie Halverson » jhalverson@gamersrepublic.com
CONTROLLER Danielle Evans » devans@gamersrepublic.com
PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR Tom Stratton » tstratton@gamersrepublic.com
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR Niquie Hutchison » nhutchison@gamersrepublic.com
MARKETING DIRECTOR Paul Rohde » prohde@gamersrepublic.com
SUBSCRIPTIONS MANAGER Cassandra Bugg » cbugg@gamersrepublic.com

HEARST DISTRIBUTION GROUP
Mr. Wayne Beder
250 West 55th Street
New York, NY 10019-5288
Phone: 212-649-4422
Fax: 212-247-2693
wbeder@hearst.com

HDG HEARST DISTRIBUTION GROUP, INC.

SUBSCRIPTION AND BACK ISSUES
Customer Service
subs@gamersrepublic.com
tel: 818.889.4372 ext.210
fax: 818.889.3195

AD SALES

Julie Halverson, Westlake Village, CA
jhalverson@gamersrepublic.com
tel: 818.889.4372 ext. 204
fax: 818.889.4606

ADVERTISING AND SALES DEPARTMENT
32123 Lindero Canyon Road, Suite 218
Westlake Village, CA 91361
ads@gamersrepublic.com

WORLDWIDE OFFICES

MILLENNIUM CORPORATE & EDITORIAL OFFICES
32123 Lindero Canyon Road, Suite 215
Westlake Village, CA 91361
tel: 818.889.4372
fax: 818.889.3195
millennium@gamersrepublic.com

MILLENNIUM EDITORIAL OFFICE, JAPAN
21-404
710-50 Higashi Arai, Oomiya-city
Saitama 330-0825 Japan
tel: 011-814-86865919
fax: 011-814-86865909
japan@gamersrepublic.com

FIND US ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB:
www.gamersrepublic.com

BPA International Membership Applied for May 11, 1999

SPECIAL THANKS: Melanie H. and Sandra at Ubi Soft (even if I can't eat the cookies) Heather and Karen from SoA, everyone at Microsoft for their hospitality, Perrin Kaplan, ADV, Bandai, Pioneer, Urban Vision, Banzai Anime, Palisades Marketing, Kotobukiya, and most of all Sony for the package that arrived on October 26. That was truly a magnificent surprise.

For High-quality article reprints in quantities of 100 or more, including electronic reprint, please contact:
REPRINT MANAGEMENT SERVICES
717.399.1900 (phone)
717.399.8900 (fax)
email: jwarfel@rmsreprints.com

Did we fail to disclose your copyright? We're very sorry! Tell us about it, and we'll correct it.

Gamers' Republic is proud to use Monster Cable Monster Game Interconnects for all gameplay testing

MADE IN THE U.S.A.
WESTLAKE VILLAGE, CALIFORNIA
PRINTED IN CANADA

GAMERS' REPUBLIC™ (ISSN 1520-5169) is published monthly by Millennium Publications, 32123 Lindero Canyon Road, suite 215, Westlake Village, CA 91361. Application to Mail at Periodical Postage Paid at Thousand Oaks, CA and additional mailing offices. Single issue rates: $4.99, yearly newsstand value: $59.88. The one year (12 issue) subscription rate is $27.99 in the U.S., $43.97 in Canada, and $67.00 in all other foreign locales. Checks must be made payable in U.S. currency only to Millennium Publications. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to **GAMERS' REPUBLIC, 32123 Lindero Canyon Road, Suite 215, Westlake Village, CA 91361, Attn: Subscriptions.** For subscription service questions, call (877) GR8-GAME. We periodically make lists of our customers available to mailers of goods and services that may interest you. If you do not wish to receive such mailings, please write to us and include a copy of your mailing label. Please allow 6-8 weeks before receiving your first issue, as well as for any subscription changes to take place on any existing subscription. The editors and the publisher are not responsible for any unsolicited materials; all unsolicited material becomes the property of Millennium Publications, Inc. Without limiting the rights under copyrights reserved herein, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in, or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise) without the prior written notice of Millennium Publications, Inc. To reuse any material in this publication, obtain a permission request form by contacting Millennium Publications, Inc. at (818) 889-4372 [phone] or (818) 889-3195 [fax]. © Millennium Publications Inc. All Rights Reserved. Millennium™, Gamers' Republic™, Millennium Strategy Guides™, Millennium Books™, and Millennium Presents™ are trademarks and copyrights of Millennium Publications Inc. ™ and © for all other products and the characters contained therein are owned by the respective trademark and copyright owners. All materials listed in this magazine are subject to manufacturers' change and the publisher assumes no responsibility for such changes.

A classic battle of eat or be eaten.

Torneko is hungry. But so are the monsters. With character and monster design by Akira Toriyama, ***Torneko: The Last Hope*** is an addictive RPG-style adventure with a twist! You'll sweat bullets trying to survive the ***Dragon Warrior*** monsters coming at you in an ever-changing labyrinth of dungeons. But if you get Torneko his food, you just might make it out alive!

WORLD OF DRAGON WARRIOR

TORNEKO

THE LAST HOPE™

© 2000 Chun Soft/Armor Project/Bird Studio/Koichi Sugiyama/Enix. Torneko: The Last Hope is a trademark and Dragon Warrior and ENIX are registered trademarks of ENIX Corporation. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of Interactive Digital Software Association. All Rights Reserved.

PlayStation

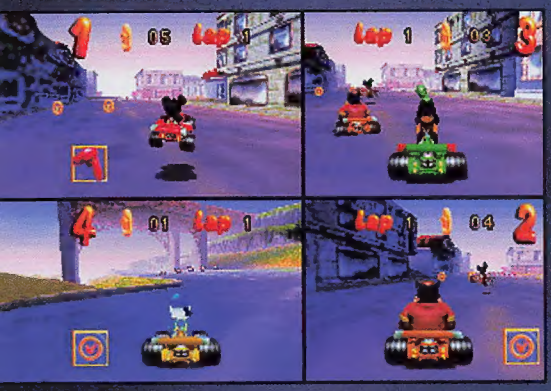
TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Mild Animated Violence
Comic Mischief

ENIX

www.enix.com

MICKEY'S SPEEDWAY USA



Okay, aerodynamic he's not.

EVERYONE

©Disney. Licensed to Nintendo. Game by Rare.
The "N" logo is a trademark of Nintendo of America Inc.
Rareware logo is a trademark of Rare.
©2000 Nintendo of America Inc.
www.nintendo.com

But Mickey and his friends still tear it up with 4-player action and 16 magical tracks.

ISBN4-69-GR/12-2000
0 74851 08351 2 06
A MILLENNIUM PUBLICATION
GR

GR VOL. 3 ISSUE # 7

TRANSCONTINENTAL GAMING GUIDE
A MILLENNIUM PROJECT

GRANDIA II .24

Just over a year after the launch of the Dreamcast, epic RPGs are already upon us, headed by what promises to be one of the very best ever, Grandia II. Join Ryudo, Elena, Roan, Mareg, and Millenia as they embark on an unforgettable journey with you as their guide.

PS2
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore 66
Donald Duck 64
Dynasty Warriors 2 92
Fantavision 92
Gameday 2001 95
Kengo 64
Kessen 92
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2 42
MDK 2 46
Midnight Club 93
NASCAR 2001 97
Onimusha 50
Ready 2 Rumble 2 93
Real Pool 87
Red Faction 64
Sky Odyssey 68
Summoner 93
Surfing H3O 93
Timesplitters 67
Top Gear Daredevil 63
Unreal Tournament 67

DREAMCAST
Bangai-O 87
Buzz Lightyear 91
Capcom vs. SNK 76
Chicken Run 58
Dave Mirra BMX 58
Grandia II 24
Heavy Metal FAKK 2 59
Jedi Power Battles 90
Jet Grind Radio 74
KISS 63
Metropolis Street Racer 69
NBA 2K1 94
Project Justice 62
Quake III Arena 91
Red Dog 70
Samba de Amigo 90
Sega Marine Fishing 96
Shenmue 72
Sonic Shuffle 59
Space Race 78
Test Drive Le Mans 87
The Next Tetris 64
Tony Hawk 2 79

PLAYSTATION
Breath of Fire IV 84
Dance Dance Revolution 58
Emperor's New Groove 88
Evil Dead 58
Final Fantasy IX 80
Gundam Battle Assault 62
Incredible Crisis 88
Jarrett & Labonte Racing 97
Looney Tunes Racing 89
Mike Tyson Boxing 97
NCAA Final Four 2001 97
RC de Go! 90
Ricky Carmichael 62
Torneko: The Last Hope 89
UFC 88
WCW Backstage Assault 89
Woody Woodpecker 89
WWF Smackdown! 2 91

NINTENDO 64
Donald Duck 83
Spider-Man 90
WWF No Mercy 86

GAME BOY COLOR
Little Nicky 98
Yogi Bear Great Balloon Blast 98
Dexter's Lab: Robot Rampage 98
Pokemon Gold/Silver 98

OTHER FEATURES
Bad Dreamscast 54
Korn Feature 130
Tech Front 129
Xbox Feature 32

GAMES INDEX

ISSUE 31 - DECEMBER 2000

www.gamersrepublic.com

Manifesto .02	Mobile Gaming .98	GR Gear .128
Frontlines .10	GR Sports .94	Music .112
Database .16	GRkives .99	Cinematrix .126
PG Previews .58	World Republic .100	Codex .124
Reviews Opener .65	Anime Republic .106	Fallout .120
PG Reviews .87	GR Synthetics .118	Coming Next Month .135

JET GRIND RADIO .74

Considered by many as Sega's best original effort since the Dreamcast launch, Jet Grind Radio breaks new ground (and skates on it too) in 3D game design and gameplay. And the music will leave a smile on your face long after the GGs make things right in Tokyoto.

FINAL FANTASY IX .80

From the moment we saw the first screenshot and learned that Square was returning to its design roots of pure fantasy, we just knew Final Fantasy IX would be a treasure. It turns out no expectation could have been too high for this triumph.

COLOR CODED FOR ACCURACY

MONTHLY GAMING NEWS

FRONTLINES

THE PS9 COUNTDOWN BEGINS

Scantily clad women grinding in cages, vats of free alcohol, tons of celebrities, fog machines, world renowned DJs like Paul Okenfeld pumping out loud music, and jumbo screens displaying the biggest launch titles for PlayStation 2. Just another typical Sony party? Not this time: kicking off the most highly anticipated hardware launch in the short history of gaming, Sony made every effort to project a hip, stylish, and ultracool image by throwing a monsterous party in two levels of a parking garage at the Pacific Design Center in Beverly Hills. Matt Stone, one of the many Hollywood locals joining in on the scintillating festivities, didn't appear too impressed, as some overheard him shouting the praises of Dreamcast. Others, like Ryan Phillepe and Jason Biggs seemed enamored of Sony's newest technological giant, huddled at the game stations, beaming as they played such games as SSX Snowboarding and Tekken Tag Tournament. Thankfully, no one rioted when the lights went up and discovered that free PlayStation 2s weren't going to be handed out as rumored.

XCITING NEWS FROM THQ

In October, THQ held their second annual Gamers' Day in Las Vegas. The press-only event stretched across four days in the city that never sleeps, and included the opportunity to attend the 2000 U.S. Motocross Open and watch Ricky Carmichael cinch another victory. Quick to get business out of the way, the trip started with THQ gathering us at the House of Blues Foundation Room. We were shown various video footage of their Fall '00 and Spring '01 titles (most of which are previewed in this issue), broke for lunch, then reconvened for a sneak peek at a newly announced game being developed by Inifinite Machine for THQ. While we can't say which system it is for, we can say that it's not for a Sega, Sony or Nintendo unit. You do the long division. While it wasn't playable, the concept, look and presentation were outstanding. Titled New Legends, the game is set in early China, with a melee-style fight system. If the game had to be categorized or compared, the Tobal series is probably the closest game to it. The models and environments are stunning and were said to be unfinshed. Seems this system has power to burn.

PS2 - BLACK AND BLUE

TWISTED METAL BLACK

In an effort to gain more mainstream press coverage, Sony held a day-long press conference covering the marketing of the PS and how they were going to continue their success with the PS2. How were they going to secure this gravy train? Lots of games—made fast. While most of the games on display had been exposed to us for quite a while, three new titles kept us excited long enough to sit through the ones we've been playing for the past few months. Not that the launch titles aren't hot, it's just that now's the time to start looking towards the second-generation games.

First on the list was Bouncer. While gameplay was absent from the video, a lenghty CG sequence showcased Square's superiority in art direction. The game was also synched with english dialog and subtitles. This one may be closer to release than Square/EA leads us to believe.

Next was Gran Turismo 3, formally known as GT 2000. Awesome. This game will reinforce what fans already know. Amazing car physics and beautiful backdrops push this game to another level.

And finally, there was Twisted Metal: Black. Pulling together the core group that designed the original, SCEA promises the game will be getting back to its roots. Blistering frame rates, sharply detailed car models and insane combat animations left us amazed at what is just around the corner.

ABE'S ACTUAL EXODUS - FOLLOW...

We've been following Munch's Oddysee for months now, watching the game move from disparate pieces scattered on high-powered workstations to gorgeous segments that looked like a PlayStation 2 treasure. What a shock it was to learn that Oddworld is taking its creation to Xbox, dumping Sony permanently. No word yet as to the details of this switch, but if Microsoft's impressive hardware specs prove as superior to PlayStation 2 in application as in theory, then we wish them the best in these exciting times.

GUNGRIFFON BLAZE™

IN A POST-APOCALYPTIC FUTURE
LAW ENFORCEMENT HAS A BOLD NEW LOOK

"*Easily* one of the best PS2 launch titles."
—Gamers' Republic

PlayStation 2

TEEN T Animated Violence Mild Language
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

WORKING DESIGNS®
Our games go to 11!™

PlayStation and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. GUNGRIFFON BLAZE is a trademark of Game Arts. Licensed from Game Arts by Working Designs. Original Game © Game Arts 2000. Portions of the English Translation © Working Designs 2003. Working Designs is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. If you're happy and you know it, target mechs. If you're happy and you know it, target mechs. If you're happy and you know it you can lock on and fire. If you're happy and you know it, target mechs. Web ... gungriffonblaze.com. For a dealer near you, call (530) 243-3417.

AIBO'S COOL - 4 ME 2 POOP ON!

Wouldn't it be nice to have a robot at your beck and call? A lot of you may have seen or heard about Honda's amazing humanoid P3 robot that behaves much like one of us (is this like the beginning of *The Matrix* or what?) but seeing the P3 in action is shocking as it mimics human actions like carrying a fish tank full of water or going up and down stairs! It's an extremely daunting task to give a robot human motion, encompassing many technologies being utilized in unison. Honda has mad skills.

The big news is that starting sometime next year, Honda will offer the P3 to the public! Initially, Honda expects demands from corporations for entertainment and educational purposes, but the company eventually hopes to have the robot in nursing homes and working rescue with robotics production as its next generation core business. The P3 robot weighs 130kg (263lbs.) right now, but by the time the robot is available next year, the weight will be cut nearly in half. The price? A mere $100,000. So, it's more than a pair of Boxsters... You get a friend for life and talk about a chick magnet!

WHEN GOOD EDITORS TURN BAD

Just three weeks before Mike Tyson wreaked fear and anguish upon poor Mr. Golota, Codemasters enlisted a core group of game editors to try our own skills with the newly released Mike Tyson Boxing for the PS. But before they had us play the game, they rolled us out to a boxing gym in the greater part of Las Vegas, had us train for about an hour, then proceeded to pit us against each other. And that's when the fun began! After a few editor injuries, complete with trips to the local ER, those in charge had us throwing down at a mean game of Rock, Paper, Scissors to decide the victor. The experience was second to none. Later that night, we regrouped and met for some food and finally a chance to play the finished product. How is it? Check out the review in GR Sports.

"Tastes like editor...Got kids?"

IN OTHER NEWS... For all of you new PS2 owners out there waiting to get your hands on Silpheed, Working Designs has informed us that Treasure has completed work on drastically reducing the game's few bouts of slowdown and along with some newly recorded speech, the game is all systems go! Look for a late Nov. release. In shooter heaven. Lunar 2's in the final stretch as well and is packed with even more goodies than previously reported!

SEGA PAINTS THE TOWN - LITERALLY

When it comes to events, Sega knows how to party, and as it turns out, give back in the process. At the recent Jet Grind "Graffiti Is Art" contest held in San Francisco, masters of the art (which is so skillfully portrayed in JGR—at least one GR staffer's game of the year) got the chance to show their stuff without keeping an eye out for the local PD! The winner—Sake from San Diego, CA—took home a check he could surf on in the amount of $5,000 (that'll buy a lot of Krylon) and a copy of Jet Grind Radio. Speaking on behalf of the Neighborhood Beautification Project was director Wendy Nelder, who must be overjoyed that a percentage of the profits from Jet Grind will be going to the fund to help eradicate graffiti vandalism. Hey, if they set up billboards like these ones all over town—problem solved! Anyway, I guess we know what all the kids in her family are getting for Christmas. Yo, so when you buy Jet Grind, you're helping... Yeah, it's SF but still it's a good cause—that real-estate is sky high!

"If anyone gets paint on my white pants, I'll beat you with this mic, otherwise paint yourselves silly." Peter Moore - the man with the master plan.

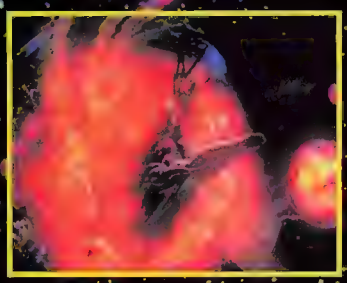
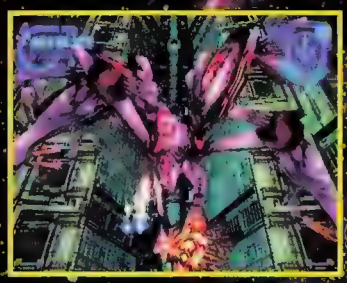
The Heather we always thank in Special Thanks—here she is. Sega blue baby! And check those stylin' boots! Here she floats a check to the big winner, Sake. Now maybe he can buy a PS2 on ebay.

SILPHEED

THE LOST PLANET

Believe in Your Pilots
Hope for the Best
Pray for a Savior

"A visual feast for PS2 owners...in shooter heaven."
– Gamers' Republic

PlayStation 2

TEEN T Animated Violence Mild Language

WORKING DESIGNS

Our games go to 11!™

PlayStation and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. "SILPHEED" is a registered trademark of Game Arts. Licensed from Game Arts by Working Designs. Original Game © Game Arts 2000. Portions of the English Translation © Working Designs 2000. "Working Designs" is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. You obviously don't have a life if you're reading this far, so why not check out the far more interesting content at http://www.workingdesigns.com? For a dealer near you, call (530) 243-3417.

A HOT LUNCH WITH NINTENDO'S PERRIN KAPLAN

By Michael Puccini

A year ago I spent time talking with one of the most powerful men in the video game industry, Nintendo's executive vice-president of sales and marketing, Peter Main. This year I thought I'd hang out with an executive I've known since I first started working in the video game industry back in 1994, Perrin Kaplan (affectionately known as PK). To make the situation more of a distinguished pleasure, I was the first to interview PK in her recently acquired position as Nintendo's vice-president of corporate communications.

Just as Main is the cream of the crop in his fields, PK is likewise at the top of the heap in investor and public relations and event planning/coordination. If you've heard about or been to a great Nintendo event/promotion in the past six years, it's been meticulously planned by PK and her staff. There isn't a major videogame journalist who 1) doesn't know who she is, and 2) doesn't like how she treats them. Perrin's expertise in her business is accented by her affable personality and (as you'll read from beginning to end) her incredible, playful sense of humor.

So it was with great excitement that I packed up my audiocassette recorder and headed up to Nintendo to have lunch with and conduct my first interview with PK.

Sad thing - Pooch actually lost.

GAMERS' REPUBLIC: First, congratulations PK on your new position.

Perrin Kaplan: Thanks, man. How's your sandwich?

GR: It's delicious. Thanks for lunch. So, refresh my memory on your beginnings at Nintendo.

PK: I came in as Sega started to eat our lunch in 1992...and helped fight the good fight!

GR: So then after your work with the Super NES, you were instrumental in the launch of N64, overseeing the media relations and investor relations for the U.S. launch of the system, right?

PK: Yep.

GR: Now what are your duties as the vice president of corporate communications?

PK: Michael, I swear to God, it's the 7-11 of the company. We're really just the catch-all for a lot of things. But we're also spending a lot of time on the launches of the current products and are spending a lot of time on Gamecube and Game Boy Advance, about how we're going to roll these products out. And then, of course, there's a whole variety of issues that span from the FTC (Federal Trade Commission) issues, violence in video games, to our European show to community relations.

GR: So what's the feeling at Nintendo about Mr. Lieberman potentially becoming vice-president of the United States of America?

PK: I can only speak for Nintendo and tell you that Nintendo has a really good relationship with him. We've generally seen fairly eye-to-eye and, as you know, Nintendo was one of the companies that really worked hard to form the IDSA and the ESRB and very much support a ratings system and believe all products should be rated. And I do believe that there is a misperception that the majority of all games are violent. I think that Senator Lieberman understands that, yet he's also touched on an issue that's really important to a lot of people. And Nintendo is in agreement with him and in understanding of that. We wrote a letter to eight different congress people, telling them about Perfect Dark, reminding them that the demographics have changed for this business and that while Nintendo has spent so many years making games for everybody, and we still do, that we are going to be moving into some M-rated games and that this is what players are asking for, yet this is how careful we are going to be in our marketing. In marketing an M game, we're going to be completely ethical, moral and very targeted with it. And after sending the letters to all eight elected officials, the only one who answered was Lieberman. He said, "Although I'm sad to see that Nintendo feels compelled to make M games, I really admire and respect your frankness about your marketing and trust that you'll be doing the right thing and look forward to working with you."

GR: Conker is obviously M content what with Conker peeing to put out fires and...

PK: Michael, it's called urinating...and besides, Conker's still evolving.

GR: So there's a chance that some of that stuff might be taken out?

PK: I can't say that. What I can say is that the game hasn't been rated yet and that it has slapstick humor and the kind of humor that appeals to all those people who love South Park.

GR: Since you're coming out with Conker, and if these M games sell well for Nintendo, do you think that you'll start to come out with more games for an older audience?

PK: I think that we'll continue to keep an eye on the demographics as players do get older. With that said, there are kids who turn 6-years-old every day and fall in love with Mario and we will remain loyal to them as well...the sounds you are hearing are the table creaking, not Michael flatulating.

GR: Thanks PK.

In The Darkest Hour,
Hope Springs Eternal.

You are fortu
power of the Goddess Althena
250+ Page Hardbound
Strategy Guide!
OFFICIAL STRATEGY GUIDE
LUNAR 2
ETERNAL BLUE
COMPLETE
Buy the Official Strategy Guide
PlayStation
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Animated Violence
Mild Language
Suggestive Themes

LUNAR 2®

ETERNAL BLUE COMPLETE

Five Disc Collector's Edition!

- ★ Includes: 3 Game CDs, 1 Music CD, and 1 Exclusive "Making of LUNAR 2" CD!
- ★ 100+ Page Leatherette Hardbound Artbook/Instruction Manual!
- ★ Exclusive Full-Size Lucia's Pendant!
- ★ Exclusive Character Mini-Standees!
- ★ Pre-order to Receive a FREE Limited Edition Ghaleon Punching Puppet. For Complete Details Visit Participating Retailers, or visit us at http://www.workingdesigns.com.

WORKING DESIGNS®

Our games go to 11!™

PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. SEGA is a registered trademark of Game Arts/Working Designs. Licensed from ESP by Working Designs. Original Game © Game Arts/Studio Alex 1994-1999. Reprogrammed game © Game Arts/Kadokawa Shoten 1998. Translation © Working Designs 2000. Working Designs is a registered trademark of Working Designs, Inc. All rights reserved. Warning: Contains no products, not to get a life. Or, a girlfriend. Or both. Web Address: http://www.workingdesigns.com For a dealer near you, call (530) 243-3417.

PK: No problem.

GR: So let's talk about all the recent news being made by your neighbors across the street.

PK: Oh, you mean Eddie Bauer?

GR: No, your other neighbors, Microsoft.
PK: Oh.

GR: Microsoft is planning to release Xbox next year, right around the same time that Nintendo's planning on releasing Gamecube. Are you guys prepared to take Microsoft head-on?
PK: Sure. You should ask them if they're prepared to take us head on. We're creating a machine that is solely gaming. With such a focus, I guess it would challenge any of the companies to say that they are able to do games better than Nintendo. That will be Microsoft's biggest challenge. No amount of marketing money can sell something a consumer doesn't want. I trust that Microsoft will be able to make quality products. Their record's pretty good, but that's the challenge that remains before them.

GR: You were at Space World in Japan correct?
PK: Yes. It was awesome.

GR: What feeling did you...
PK: The McDonald's hamburgers are literally half the size of the hamburgers here. I'd get a Big Mac and look at it and think, "This is it?!" No wonder why Americans are so fat.

GR: No...seriously...what type of vibe did you get not only from the attendees over there, but, upon your return to the U.S., how did you see that the press received Gamecube?
PK: There was really good energy in the room. There was a huge crowd. Miyamoto was at his absolute best. He was just in his element. There was a lot of energy in the room and a lot of people were very excited and I think it made the thing seem more real to everybody, that this product is coming and it's going to be great. Game Boy Advance was stunning and wonderful. It's so small. It's so cool. You can't believe what kind of power is packed in this small piece of hardware. It's amazing. I mean, the thing literally fits in your pocket. It's really incredible. There will be tons of games for it. And there were long lines to play the games that were at the show.

GR: What do you guys think of Sega's situation with Dreamcast and their recently launched network division?
PK: It's really hard to say. There's no company that's been able to make a lot of money doing online gaming. I don't think that Sega will be the first casualty if things don't go right. With that said, I don't think that they have any options left. I mean, Dreamcast is a fabulous product. It just hasn't caught on. Everybody I've talked to loves it. It just hasn't caught on to the mass consumer. And that's unfortunate.

GR: Let's talk about N64. From the E3 show this year we know that Dinosaur Planet is still coming out, Conker, Banjo-Tooie, Eternal Darkness...is that enough to sustain Nintendo not only through this holiday but through next year as well?
PK: See, there's a perception and then there's a reality. There are millions of hardware units still to be sold and multi-millions of games still to be sold. And there are still a lot of consumers who have not entered the fray or who want to try it out who are still playing SNES. There's still so much business to be had.

GR: What about software titles? Just about all the third-party developers have bailed?
PK: We're still going to make plenty of games. And the games that we do have are pretty amazing. Dinosaur Planet is beautiful. To me it looks like a game on a next-generation system...don't you think?

GR: No.
PK: You don't?

GR: No.
PK: It looks like a regular N64 game?

GR: Yep.
PK: It doesn't look like the future?

GR: Nope. How's Peter Main?
PK: He's doing great. He's currently away on vacation.

GR: So, PK, any final words to the gamers?
PK: Game on! Great N64 games are still to be had. Come play and have fun with us. By the way, if you want to get a date, ask a girl out and play video games later. And if she's into them, then she's your kind of girl. **GR**

Together with the new mini-DVD format, the magic of Miyamoto and Rare, and extremely developer-friendly tools, Nintendo's Gamecube promises to be the ultimate gamer's system. Before you know it, we'll be gazing at the next evolution of Mario. Imagine that.

4x4 EVO™

You've been hypnotized into thinking you're pretty good. On the count of three, you will wake up.

You are no stranger to single-player mode racing. You are King of the Road. You are way out of your element. Introducing 4x4 Evolution, the first game with internet connectivity for heavy-duty off-road competitions between Sega Dreamcast, PC and Mac users simultaneously. Because racing alone is like having sex by yourself.

ALL THE TOP SUVS AND TRUCKS FROM LEADING MANUFACTURERS TO CUSTOMIZE • 16 MERCILESS OFF-ROAD COURSES, EACH WITH THEIR OWN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT, MUSIC SCORE AND DIFFICULTY • GO ANYWHERE GAMEPLAY — NO PREDETERMINED TRACK • ACCURATE PHYSICS, PHOTO-REALISTIC GRAPHICS, AND UNFORGIVING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developed by TERMINAL REALITY

Published by GATHERING DEVELOPER

Sega is registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, LTD. ©SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD. 2000. All Rights Reserved. 4x4 Evolution is a trademark of Terminal Reality Inc.

Sega Dreamcast.™

Mac

PC CD ROM

MONTHLY CHARTS PROVIDED BY NPD DATA TRACKING SERVICES

NPD THE NPD GROUP, INC.

database

YOUR NUMBER ONE SOURCE FOR TOP SELLING CONSOLE AND COMPUTER GAME STATISTICS

top ten selling playstation titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD WEEK OF OCTOBER 10-16, 2000

1. T. HAWK PRO SKATER 2	ACTIVISION	6. DAVE MIRRA BMX	ACCLAIM
2. MADDEN NFL 2001	EA	7. GRAN TURISMO 2	SONY
3. T. HAWK PRO SKATER	ACTIVISION	8. NHL 2001	EA
4. SPIDER-MAN	ACTIVISION	9. NFL GAMEDAY 2001	SONY
5. NBA LIVE 2001	EA	10. PARASITE EVE 2	SQUARE/EA

top ten selling nintendo64 titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD WEEK OF OCTOBER 10-16, 2000

1. SW EPISODE 1. RACER	LUCAS ARTS	6. NFL BLITZ 2001	MIDWAY
2. OGRE BATTLE 64	ATLUS	7. ARMY MEN: SARGE'S 2	3DO
3. MADDEN- NFL 2001	EA	8. PERFECT DARK	NINTENDO
4. T. HAWK PRO SKATER	ACTIVISION	9. POWER RANGERS	THQ INC.
5. POKÉMON PUZZLE	NINTENDO	10. KIRBY CRYSTAL SHARDS	NINTENDO

top ten selling dreamcast titles

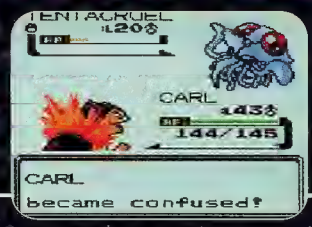
*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD WEEK OF OCTOBER 10-16, 2000

1. NFL 2K1	SEGA	6. S.F. III 3RD STRIKE	CAPCOM
2. UFC	CRAVE	7. VIRTUA TENNIS	SEGA
3. JEDI POWERE BATTLES	LUCAS ARTS	8. TOKYO XTREME RACER 2	CRAVE
4. SONIC ADVENTURE	SEGA	9. SEGA GT	SEGA
5. T.HAWK PRO SKATER	CRAVE	10. POWER STONE 2	CAPCOM

top ten selling gameboy color titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD WEEK OF OCTOBER 10-16, 2000

1. POKÉMON SILVER	NINTENDO	6. SUPER MARIO BROS.	NINTENDO
2. POKÉMON GOLD	NINTENDO	7. THE LEGEND OF ZELDA	NINTENDO
3. SPIDER-MAN	ACTIVISION	8. WHO WANTS..MILLION	DISNEY
4. T.HAWK PRO SKATER	ACTIVISION	9. LITTLE MERMAID 2	NINTENDO
5. POKÉMON YELLOW	NINTENDO	10. DRAGON WARRIOR 1 & 2	ENIX



top ten selling overall console titles

*RANKED ON UNITS SOLD WEEK OF OCTOBER 10-16, 2000

1. POKÉMON SILVER-GBC	NINTENDO	6. T.HAWK PRO SKATER-PS	ACTIVISION
2. POKÉMON GOLD-GBC	NINTENDO	7. SPIDER-MAN-PS	ACTIVISION
3. T.HAWK PRO SKATER 2-PS	ACTIVISION	8. NBA LIVE 2001-PS	EA
4. NFL 2K1-DC	SEGA	9. DAVE MIRRA BMX-PS	ACCLAIM
5. MADDEN NFL 2001-PS	EA	10. SPIDER-MAN-GBC	ACTIVISION

world republic top ten games

top ten japanese titles

1.	PERFECT DARK	N64	6.	YUGIOH D.M. III	GB
2.	MOTO GP	PS2	7.	FURAI no SHIREN 2	N64
3.	DRAGON QUEST VII	PS	8.	MYSTERY MAN ZONAH	GB
4.	GEKIKUUKAN P.B.	PS2	9.	KORO KORO KIRBY	GB
5.	ROCKMAN X	GB	10.	HAMSTER TAROU	GB

* FROM OCT 16-OCT22, 2000

top ten u.k. titles

1.	POKÉMON YELLOW	GB	6.	PERFECT DARK	N64
2.	X-MEN MUTANT ACADEMY	PS	7.	FRONT MISSION 3	PS
3.	POKÉMON BLUE	GB	8.	COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2.0	PS
4.	POKÉMON RED	GB	9.	SUPER MARIO BROS. DELUXE	GB
5.	WWF SMACKDOWN!	PS	10.	IN COLD BLOOD	PS

* WEEK ENDING OCT 14, 2000

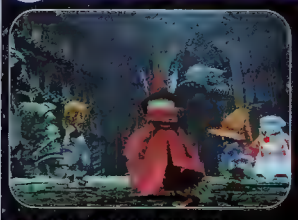
gamers' republic top ten games

* BASED ON GAMES PLAYED THROUGH OCTOBER 31, 2000

d halverson

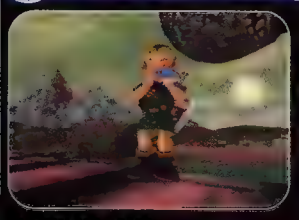
1.	JET GRIND RADIO	DC
2.	GRANDIA II	DC
3.	SKIES OF ARCADIA	DC
4.	ZELDA: MM	N64
5.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
6.	SILPHEED: TLP	PS2
7.	RED DOG	DC
8.	MOTO GP	PS2
9.	SPAWN: ITDH	DC
10.	MIDNIGHT CLUB	PS2

b siechter



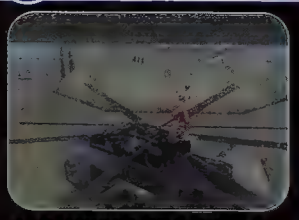
1.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
2.	ZELDA:MM	N64
3.	DINO CRISIS	DC
4.	RESIDENT EVIL 3	DC
5.	SHENMUE	DC
6.	SPYRO: YotD	PS
7.	DYNASTY WARRIORS 2	PS2
8.	ONIMUSHA	PS2
9.	FANTAVISION	PS2
10.	SPACE RACE	DC

mike nobbs



1.	ZELDA: MM	N64
2.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
3.	MSR	DC
4.	BANGAI-O	DC
5.	SKY ODYSSEY	DC
6.	MOTO GP	PS2
7.	SILPHEED: TLP	PS2
8.	KESSEN	PS2
9.	DYNASTY WARRIORS 2	PS2
10.	SAMBA DE AMIGO	DC

t stratton



1.	T HAWK'S PRO SKTR 2	PS
2.	SNATCHER	SS
3.	SMUGGLER'S RUN	PS2
4.	MARIO GOLF	N64
5.	RIDGE RACER V	PS2
6.	NFL2K1	DC
7.	UFC	DC
8.	NBA2K1	DC
9.	SILENT HILL	PS
10.	BLAZING DRAGONS	SS

pooch

1.	REAL POOL	PS2
2.	MADDEN 2001	PS2
3.	NFL2K1	DC
4.	SEGA MARINE FISHING	DC
5.	TEKKEN TAG	PS2
6.	NFL GAMEDAY 2001	PS
7.	T HAWK'S PRO SKTR 2	PS
8.	J&L STOCK CAR	PS
9.	NFL BLITZ 2001	N64
10.	CRAZY TAXI	DC

nelson lui

1.	QUAKE III	DC
2.	T HAWK'S PRO SKTR 2	PS
3.	WWF NO MERCY	N64
4.	C&C RED ALERT 2	PC
5.	ORPHEN: S.O.S.	PS2
6.	JET GRIND RADIO	DC
7.	DIABLO 2	PC
8.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
9.	SSX SNOWBOARDING	PS2
10.	TIMESPLITTERS	PS2

bob elmquist

1.	QUAKE III	DC
2.	NFL2K1	DC
3.	MEDAL OF HONOR UG	PS
4.	SACRIFICE	PC
5.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
6.	NO ONE LIVES.....	PC
7.	SSX SNOWBOARDING	PS2
8.	TIMESPLITTERS	PS2
9.	PERFECT DARK	N64
10.	EXCITEBIKE 64	N64

c hossman

1.	WWF NO MERCY	N64
2.	CAPCOM VS. SNK	DC
3.	ZELDA: MM	N64
4.	FINAL FANTASY IX	PS
5.	BREATH OF FIRE IV	PS
6.	TMNT	ARCADE
7.	WWF SMACKDOWN! 2	PS
8.	GENSU SUIKO GAIDEN	PS
9.	SPIDER-MAN	N64
10.	YOGI BEAR	GBC

PORT AUTHORITY

WELCOME TO THE FIRST SEGA REALCAST

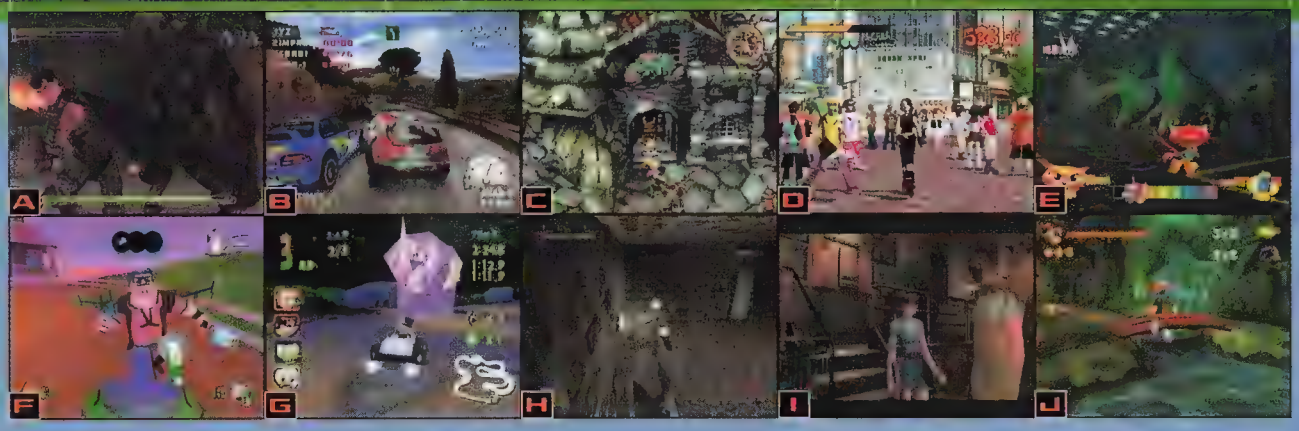
BY DAVE HALVERSON

The further I become immersed in my Dreamcast and all of the joy it brings, the more two things pain me like the flatulence that must follow a Mexican Pizza overdose (which I can only imagine seeing as how I don't consume assembly line meals.) They are Sega doubters (better known as those who don't know the system's prowess because they don't own one) and the big tree-trunk-sized thorn in the console's side: ports. Evil, no good, dirty ports.

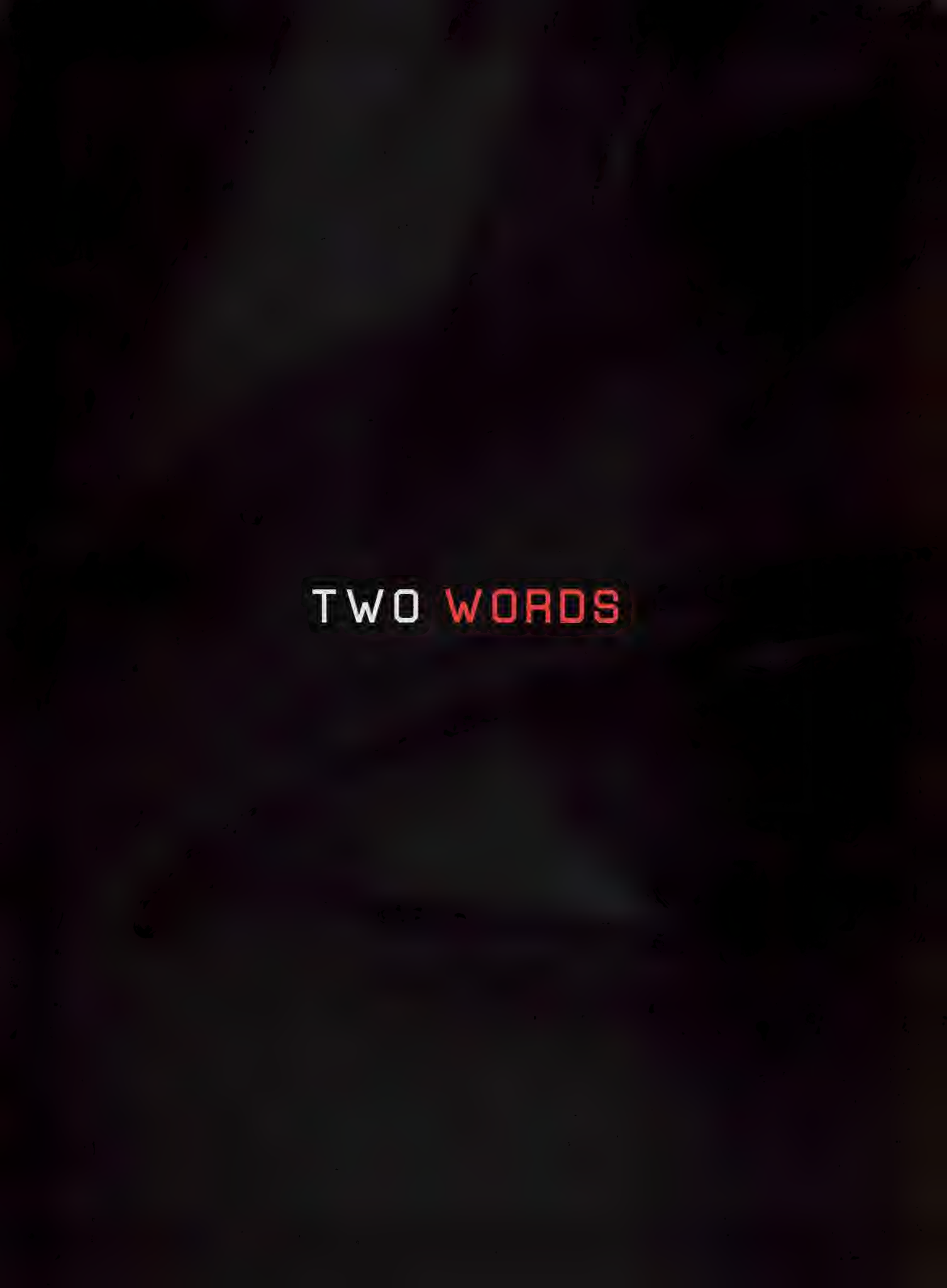
For those of you that don't know, a port is a game made for a lesser format—be it the PC, N64, or PlayStation—quickly converted to produce more cash, which in theory makes perfect sense. The problem is the way many companies are going about it. Rather than creating exclusive features inherent of the more powerful platforms, they are simply cloning. If there is an upside to this scenario, it's when a game like Dino Crisis shows up for the console, although I can't help but wonder what a few months of Dreamcast-specific polish would have brought to the characters. At its worst, games like Buzz Lightyear, Nightmare Creatures II, Omikron, and Fighting Force 2 paint an inaccurate portrayal of what the Dreamcast is really capable of. It is my belief that if a company wants to bring one of their existing games over to Dreamcast, at the very least they should have to bring the character models up to Dreamcast standards. And it would be nice if they did the same with the architecture, textures and/or the frame rate. With PS development approaching a world-wide cease fire, Dreamcast users are almost through the worst of it, but we may as well brace ourselves for the worst because, guess what a bunch of the first crop of Xbox games are bound to be? That's right: PS2 ports. Want it all to stop? Put the net to good use and email the perpetrators. Demand exclusive console-specific features of your favorite games for their respective platforms, otherwise, don't buy 'em. Anyway, here's list of the "Realcast" players along with the worst offenders on the port side thus far.

Ports aren't a bad thing; on the contrary, they're a necessary and beneficial part of the industry. We just believe that they should be more indicative of the hardware they are representing and not a license to reproduce the same content.

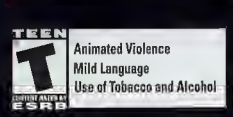
REALCAST Exclusive original content	PROBLEMATIC basic and/or shoddy ports	THE BEST PORTS welcome and/or enhanced
Grandia II	Buzz Lightyear	MDK 2
Shenmue	Toy Story 2	Tony Hawk 1&2
Sword of Berserk Gut's Rage	Nightmare Creatures II	Legacy of Kain Soul Reaver
Jet Grind Radio	Omikron The Nomad Soul	Rayman 2
Skies of Arcadia	Slave Zero	Dino Crisis
Cannon Spike	Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Resident Evil 3
Spawn In the Demon's Hand	Dave Mirra freestyle BMX	Tomb Raider Last Revelation
Red Dog	Disney Magical Racing	Jedi Power Battles
Space Race	QB Club 2000-2001	Expendable
Wacky Races	ECW Hardcore Revolution	Shadowman
Super Magnetic Neo	WWF Attitude	South Park Rally
Sonic Adventure	Fighting Force 2	Rainbow Six
Code Veronica		Star Wars Episode 1 Racer
F355 Challenge		ReVolt
Metropolis Street Racer		Silver
Maken X		Chicken Run
Ecco Defender of the Future		
Test Drive V-Rally		
NBA & NFL 2K1		
Test Drive LeMans		
Soul Calibur		
DOA2		



Examples of how huge a gap there is between thoroughbred Dreamcast games and ported software: A) Sword of Berserk's awesome models. F) Buzz Lightyear's poopy ported PS models. B) The DC doing racing right. G) Is that a rock or a dinosaur? It's a PS leftover! C) Grandia II's breathtaking textures. Look closely at the dwelling's face. H) Flat, pixely textures ported directly from PS to DC for Nightmare Creatures—a good game that could have been so much better on DC. D) A scene from the amazing Jet Grind Radio, packed with models. I) Resident Evil 3—great game but check the PS architecture. E) Fur Fighters is epic vastness. And, finally, J) the finest DC port to date—the astonishing Rayman 2.


TWO WORDS

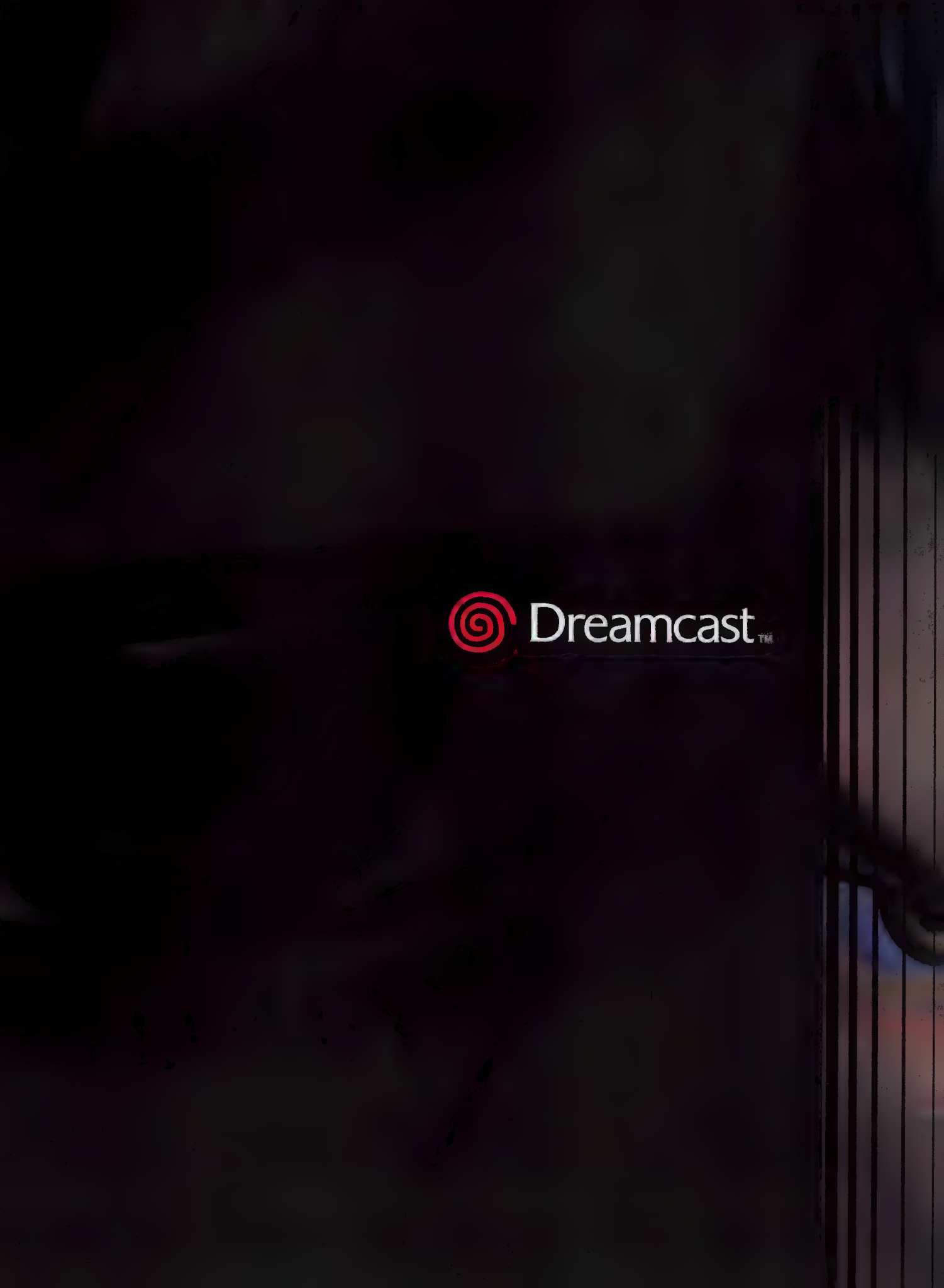
Shenmue



Animated Violence
Mild Language
Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

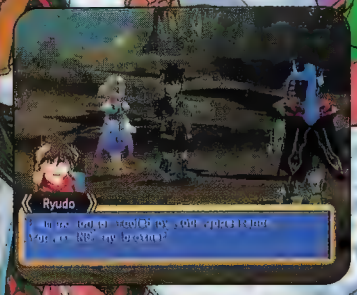
www.shenmue.com

© CRI 1999-2000 Presented by AM2 of CRI. All Rights Reserved. SEGA, DREAMCAST, the Dreamcast logo, and SHENMUE are trademarks or registered trademarks of SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD. or its affiliates.


Dreamcast

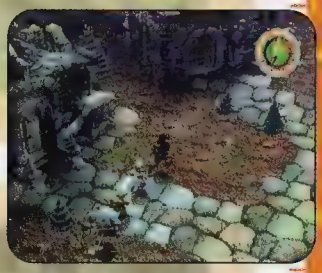
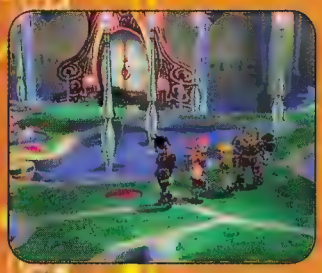
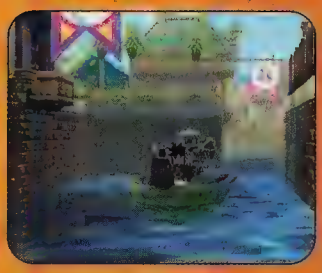
GRANDIA II

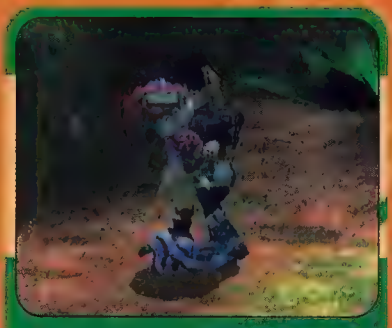
BY DAVE HALVERSON



You've arrived in this world at a crucial point in its history...or lack thereof.

Now you must decide who will win: the power of good or the darkest evil

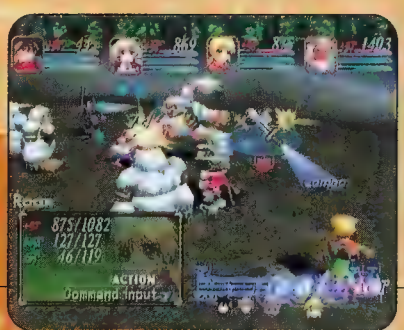




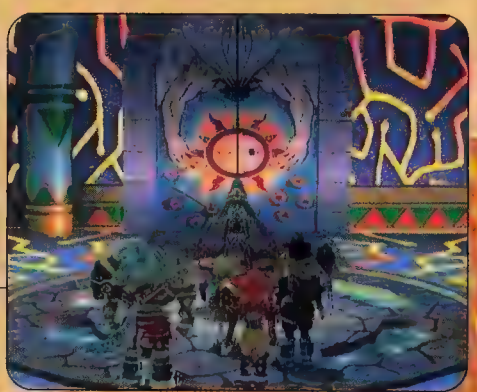


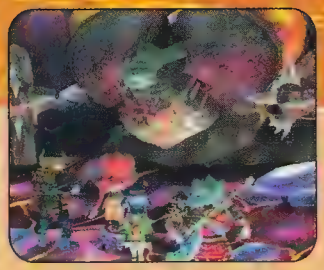
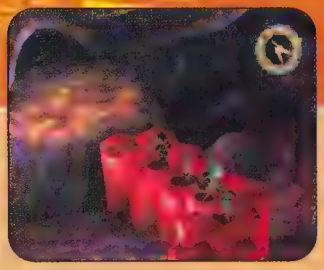
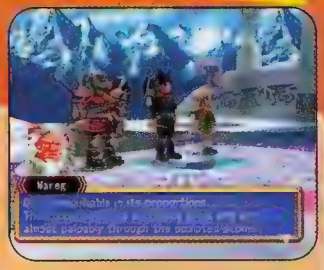
At the center of Grandia II lies a love story quite unlike any you have probably ever encountered. Ryudo's falling in love with two women hosting the same body. Elena is a nun of the church and Millenia is the clever demoness who spares her life by possessing her. Naughty and nice indeed.

Since the dawn of the modern RPG, the overall framework hasn't changed much. Nine times out of ten, the catalyst of the story tends to revolve around the power of good—always the underdog—defeating evil, mighty deities bent on oppression, and eventual world domination. The traditional method for portraying these events in a gaming environment usually involves a group or party of characters journeying from place to place, battling monster infestations until they reach their next destination and take care of whatever is plaguing that region, which usually involves the eventual killing of a large key member of whatever evil you happen to be battling. Within this rather simple framework lie the key elements that can either make or break a role-playing adventure: character design; story integration; overworld battle scenarios; menu systems for equipping, buying and using weapons; magic and items; balance, environmental maps and architecture; and, of course, music. The question of late, at least for me, is how does one make a fresh traditional RPG in such a crowded market? I've played enough RPGs over the last couple of years to choke a donkey, so for me to invest another 50 or 60 hours takes something truly special.

I was already convinced that Skies of Arcadia deserved a week of my life when Grandia II happened onto the cover. After just a few hours playing the choice was clear: I would lock myself away for three days and do nothing but eat, drink and barely sleep Grandia II. Obviously, the question I posed above was paramount on the minds of Game Art's Grandia II team (some 200 people altogether), as they have taken every element I listed and perfected each one individually, which has resulted in an overall experience that is a pure joy, and flawless in execution. This is the finest incarnation of the traditional RPG I have witnessed so far, and I'll tell you why, beginning with my first make or break RPG trait—the walk-fight quotient. As soon as I hit the overworld in a given RPG, much is decided. If the monsters are not in plain view and every few seconds I'm sucked into battle, regardless of whether I need to engage them—Houston, we have a problem. What's worse is if these battles





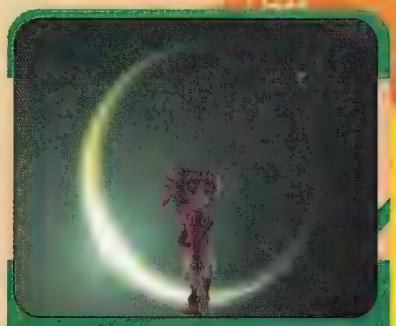




mean five or so seconds of black screen followed by a camera slowly swooping in to give me a bird's eye view of an area I'm already familiar with. Seeing as how I'm going to see the same background over and over, I really don't need or want to spend countless hours during the span of a game looking at the ceiling as they spin into place. In Grandia II, the overworld, dungeon, and labyrinth maps are simply gorgeous, and you not only see the monsters but they're represented by detailed polygonal models. Should you engage these wickedly designed beasts in battle (from the lowliest up, they are all designed impeccably), the action swoops in fast and within seconds you're engaged in battle—another aspect Game Arts has seen fit to perfect. Their brilliant battle system displays a moving gauge divided into two sectors, with icons for your party members and the monsters inching their way to the action sector. You can choose a magic or combo attack on the floating menu wheel and go for the quick strike or choose a cancel move and attempt to knock them back on the gauge, prolonging their turn long enough for the next party member to finish the job.

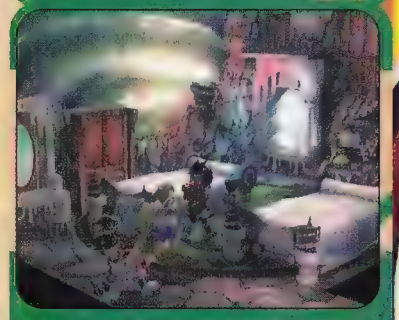
Within this framework, the battles constantly take on a new complexion depending on the characters in your party, their spell-casting ability, and your reserves in terms of replenishing items. At the outset, cunning man on beast weapon attacks are necessary, but later, as you become more powerful, you can mow down monsters in no time with a quiver of magic attacks that are second to none. Not only do the battles look and move like a dream (you can even control the camera and AI), but the spells blend MPEG video with the characters onscreen, creating a look that you will never tire of gawking at. Up to the very end of Grandia II, I was still witnessing attacks I had never seen; the breadth of the spell casting is absolutely bottomless. The battles are engaging, unfold quickly, and never grow tiresome.

Of course, none of this would matter much if the story didn't carry the battles and, here too, Game Arts has pushed the envelope. Grandia II is Teen rated for good reason. At its base, it involves its universe's age- old struggle of good vs. evil and which one will triumph, as the devil, Valmar, lord of darkness, attempts to rise again after being laid to rest by the God of light, Lord Granus. The religious overtones run deep and swell into a porridge of side stories and plot twists that keep you guessing to the bitter end. At its core lies a heart-felt family struggle, an entire faith being pulled apart by the overwhelming power of evil, and a love story

in which the lead character Ryudo—a battle savvy GeoHound (a sort of wandering gun for hire), hardened by tragedy and suffering—comes to love a girl, Elena, who is possessed by the very evil they are fighting against. There are two beings within her—one of the utmost sweetness and light, and one of the ultimate darkness—Millenia, the Wings of Valamar. It's a love triangle between a Godless killer, a nun of the church, and the sultry demoness that possess her—and that's not the half of it. This story runs deep. Although I found the text somewhat abrupt in spots and overall a tad overcomedic, for the most part it is skillfully portrayed with excellent voice acting and good writing. I suppose the levity (some of which is genuinely funny) is well-founded since the subject matter is often bleak. The layers underneath the overall breadth of the story are innumerable, but I'll leave those to you. I could not possibly even nick the surface of what goes on in this 55-hour-plus game in the span of this review.



Combining MPEG video with the action onscreen, Game Arts brings an unprecedented sense of realism to Grandia II's many magic attacks and spells. Pictured above, Millenia prepares to thank the monsters for showing up.



Of all Grandia's glistening nuances, the one that grabs me most is the game's stunning architecture. Notice the use of abalone shell on the back wall, the books, bedposts, sheets, and quaint old-world design. This is what Dreamcast is all about.

Besides Ryudo, Elena, and Millenia, the main cast is comprised of Roan, a young boy who's involvement you may at first discount but will surprise you over time; Mareg, a giant, wise, and analytical beast man who fights to keep the world pure for his people; Tio, a puppet of Valmar who, after you slay her demon, finds her heart through her relationship with Mareg; and Skye, Ryudo's 40-year-old bird who attempts to keep everyone's feet on the ground. Most importantly, you will come to know and love all of these players, as each is a compelling character who's own story evolves and reaches closure within the span of the game. Helping matters, the character models and animations are spectacular, and outfitting each with abilities is engulfing in its own right.

Which leads me to yet another shining aspect of the game—the towns. First of all, these are some of the finest-looking polygonal structures, inside and out, that I have ever seen; the detail is uncanny. Any given room is filled with individual models, rather than the usual painted-on textures. Bottles, food, lights, books, ornaments, etc.—everything is modeled. And from the outside the architecture is breathtaking, forming a world rich in technology yet steeped in mythological origins. The textures are absolutely flawless: walkways, fountains, reflective marble corridors, and organic matter are all represented with an emphasis on vibrant, fantastical themes. But, more importantly, within the towns, the gameplay simply blossoms. There is one General Store where you purchase everything (thank you

GA) and equip it right there, as you buy it. Buying, selling, and equipping is fast, easy one-stop shopping. And directly across from the general store you will always find the inn where you can recover or sleep for free (again, thank you GA), and should you decide to stay the night, they all serve you dinner (with menus specific to the region), which you can watch being eaten as you control the conversation at the table before turning in— simply perfect.

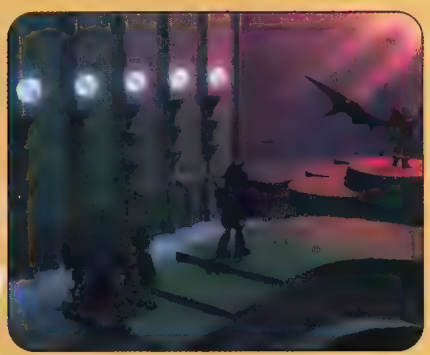
As you visit each town, you may or may not want to duck into houses and talk to the town folk. Those layers exist should you desire to milk each area, or if you do not, simply make your way to the next key location; the pace is up to you. More good news for weary travelers: you know good and well when you're leveled up enough to afford to avoid battles and so it's fairly easy to do so. Also, as the game progresses, you are rewarded for completely clearing earlier stages and outfitting each of your party members in the process. Towards the end of the game, I am mowing down large, hideous abominations at will. I'm running into battles just to gloat at how fast I can send them back to hell, throwing down expensive magic attacks with reckless abandon and watching the sparks fly. The designers let you revel in spell-casting as you progress, and rightfully so. You don't want to miss Millenia's "Starving Tongue" or "Grudging Claws," even if the battle cries that accompany them are ultra cheesy ("mmmm, fresh ground hamburger!"). I have enough potions to replenish an army and my Spell Books and Mana Eggs are both completely maxed. I know that's Greek to you now, but those of you smart enough to own a Dreamcast will know what I'm talking about soon enough.

Finally (well, almost at least), there's the all-important soundtrack, a particular area that Game Arts is highly regarded for. Honestly, during the first few hours of the game, I wasn't overwhelmed by the soundtrack, especially the overly playful overworld theme, but I soon discovered that this was because it builds with the story as well. By the end of the game it was embedded in my psyche, nestled somewhere between the battle hymns of Final Fantasy and the castle keeps of Castlevania.

And now, finally—finally—I must ice this cake with my adoration of Grandia II's overall look and the diversity in its terrain. Without spewing a thousand more words, let me just say that Game Arts has raised the bar once again. Each region offers a variable level of interaction as you negotiate ladders, cliff faces, jumps, switches, and other environmental trappings in areas laced with secret veins leading to well-deserved riches—the visual integrity of which are simply magnificent. The game's camera gives it an almost filmed look, providing real-time panning and zooming that adds a sense of volume everywhere it is in effect.

Grandia II successfully weaves a tale of religion, love, and science-fiction, allowing us to peek in at one world's private apocalypse, where we happen to weigh in on the final outcome. Along the way we are reminded somewhat of our own struggles and ritualistic behavior as certain parallels are inevitably drawn. But most importantly we are swept away into this world in such a way that ours is made just a little better by having visited it, and that is what playing video games is all about. **GR**

Visit gamersrepublic.com for in-depth interviews with Game Arts' Grandia II staff.



- THE VISUALS ARE SIMPLY UNPARALLELED
- SOUNDTRACK INVADES YOUR PSYCHE. SETS UP SHOP
- HIGH-QUALITY WRITING AND VOICE ACTING
- BY THE POWER OF GRANAS, I DEMAND YOU BUY THIS GAME!

REPUBLIC SAYS... This is a game that every Dreamcast owner who appreciates epic role-playing should embrace. It's simply a superb effort in every way. Stunning.

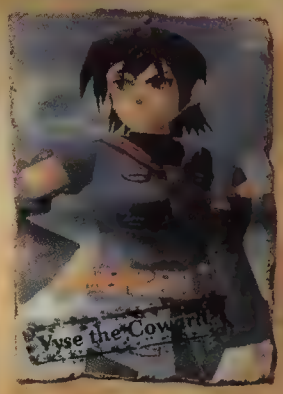
A

Mess with the best go down like the rest.

- *Three controllable characters, each with unique abilities and weapons
- *Innovative combat system
- *Famous characters from the show
- *Fight against mythical terrifying monsters
- *12 fully 3D worlds to explore in ancient Greece

T Animated Violence

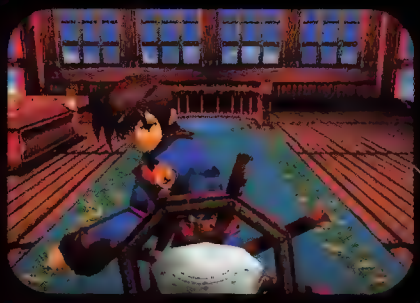
Hercules: The Legendary Journeys for Nintendo 64: ©2000 Titus - All rights reserved. Titus and the Titus logo are registered trademarks of Titus Software Corporation. Hercules: The Legendary Journeys is a trademark and copyright of Studios USA Television Distribution LLC. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed by Player One, Inc. / Nintendo, Nintendo 64 and the "N" logo are trademarks of Nintendo of America Inc. © 1996 Nintendo of America Inc. Licensed by Nintendo.

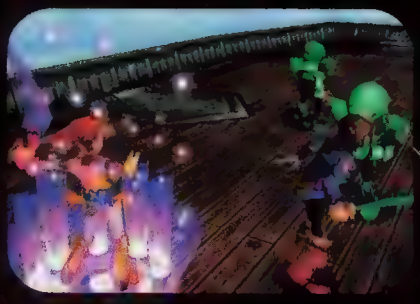


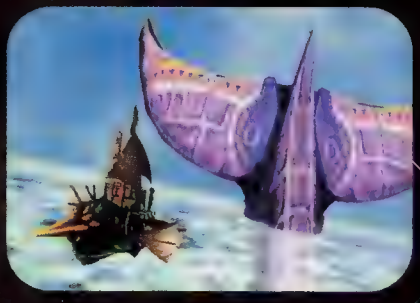
Yes, you can change your reputation.

No, you can't change your clothes.

SKIES OF ARCADIA







You're Vyse, a Blue Rogue pirate. And a well-known ninny. Which sucks. So sail the vast 3D sky in your killer airship. Discover unchartered floating islands. Fight evil pirates. With 70 weapons and 36 magic skills, you'll kick ass by the boatload. You'll be captain of your own ship with 22 crew members. You'll conquer the enemy nation. Then everyone will respect you. And they'll call you Vyse the Legend. Which rocks. Unless you don't fight. Then you're just a wuss.

Dreamcast™

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

sega.com

SEGA is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. SEGA, Dreamcast, the Dreamcast logo, and SKIES OF ARCADIA are registered trademarks or trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION or its affiliates. ©SEGA CORPORATION, 2000. All Rights Reserved. Original game © SEGA, 2000. © SEGA / OVERWORKS, INC., 2000. www.sega.com

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

BEHIND THE SCENES AT MICROSOFT

BY MICHAEL PUCCINI

Microsoft. The name alone conjures up many images, some negative, some positive. Whatever the case, the Microsoft name is as recognizable worldwide as Coca-Cola and McDonald's. When the rumor surfaced in 1999 that the house that Bill Gates built was going to enter the video-game market, many people scoffed and thought that it would never happen.

On March 10, 2000, at the Game Developers Conference (GDC) in San Jose, CA., Gates addressed a standing-room-only crowd of 3,000 to officially announce his foray into the video-game market with a product code-named Xbox, and he has since turned the industry on its head. The truth is that a core group of hardcore Microsoft gameheads had already been busy behind the scenes for nearly a year talking with the development community worldwide to make the most developer-friendly console the industry has ever seen. In fact, the developer support is nothing short of phenomenal: as of this writing, more than 170 companies are already designing games for the system, due out less than a year from now, and the applications keep pouring in.

On October 23, 2000, Microsoft Games and Oddworld Inhabitants pulled the rug out from under Sony and shocked the industry by announcing that Oddworld games would be Xbox exclusives. That same day, Gamers' Republic was granted an exclusive visit to the Microsoft Games Division's new campus, called Area Xbox, in Redmond, WA, to get the scoop on what will be the first video-game system from an American company since Nolan Bushnell created Atari back in 1972.

I had the pleasure of sitting down for some one-on-one conversations with four of the people directly responsible for the Xbox's existence and who will oversee its future. I was impressed to learn of how developer-driven the creation of Xbox was and also how the Xbox team doesn't just want to change the face of gaming, but that they want the world to realize that games are works of art.

Not only did I walk away from Microsoft with a better understanding and appreciation of this monster of a system (I was continually reminded that the system will run on a blistering Intel Pentium III 733MHz CPU, use a customized nVidia graphics chip, have 64MB of RAM, have a 5GB hard disk and 256 separate audio channels), I was also amazed at the caliber of people behind the Xbox. These weren't some stuffed shirt, non-gamer executives reading off scripts or responding to questions via email. These are hardcore game industry veterans. And I could not only feel the passion that they all had for their project, but I actually felt like I was in the genius presence of the man himself.

In this first part of a two-part exclusive interview with the Microsoft Xbox team are my conversations with Ed Fries, vice president, games publishing, and J Allard, general manager, Xbox third-party and platform relations.

(As vice president of games publishing, Ed Fries is in charge of the first-party software for Microsoft and the man personally responsible for orchestrating the Oddworld deal, as well as securing the talents of Alexei Pazhitnov, the creator of Tetris. Ed currently has more than 500 people under his jurisdiction and that number will grow to more than 700 by the end of the year, including a staff of 100 people in Microsoft's Japan office.)

Gamers' Republic: When we think of Microsoft, we don't really think of games. What are you doing to change that perception?

Ed Fries: I've been working to change that over the last five years. Five years ago, we were basically flight sims. Now we have relationships with some of the world's best game developers. When I started in this business five years ago, I think what you said is true, but the people at the PC games magazines look at us and say, "Wow, Microsoft's really come a long way." A lot of people thought, "Well, this is just another big company getting into the games business and they're not going to be successful." But I think what they didn't understand is that this group is run by gamers who really care about gaming and have a passion for it. Myself, I've worked at Microsoft for 15 years, but I started writing games for the Atari 800 back in the early 1980s, and I've been a gamer pretty much since the first PCs came out.

GR: Were you on the ground floor of the Xbox with Kevin Bachus? I interviewed Kevin at E3 and I asked him, "How did you guys get into wanting to make a game system?" And he said, "Well, we had DirectX and we went to Bill and we said we want to make a game system," and six months later you had it. Is that correct?

EF: I'd been building the games business for several years here at the company and I was approached over and over again by different people in the company saying, "Hey, why don't you make some games for my 'thing'?" Or, "I'm thinking of doing XYZ and I'd like to have some games for it too." My approach was always...you can't just kind of dip your toe in the games business. I don't want to do games for a WebTV box that has a few games. But if somebody comes to me with a serious proposal to really get into the games business...that's going to be a huge effort. I mean, you're talking about hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing, you're talking about having a machine that's really focused on gaming, then I'll take it seriously. Until then I'm going to keep on doing what I'm doing which is building our game talent, teaming us up with the world's best game developers and building our PC games business. And these DirectX guys came along and they had this plan for this thing they called Xbox. And I said, "Y'know, this is the first plan I've heard that I can really believe and get behind." Bill stepped in at one point and said, "It's not powerful enough. I want it to be by far the most powerful machine out there." So we went back to the drawing board and really looked at what nVidia could do, looked at other components of the box, and that's how we came up with a machine that's two to three times the power of PlayStation 2. And we have a built-in hard drive, which is a huge difference.

GR: I was going to ask you about that. Video games are essentially toys. But if I got one for my eight-year-old nephew, and he's throwing it around the living room, how sturdy is this thing going to be, what types of considerations are you taking in regards to the hard drive? Is there a lot of R&D?

EF: Oh yeah. The hardware group takes that very seriously. One thing that they found that was kind of interesting is that hard drives have gotten very sturdy. When they looked into this concern originally, they found out that actually the DVD-ROM drive is more fragile than the hard drive. They do these drop tests from various heights and they see at what point is it going to break and found that actually the DVD drive is the limiting factor, not the hard drive.

GR: What is your target market going to be? Nintendo's kind of got the whole kid market and Sony's got the young adult/teen market, where do you guys see yourself coming in?

EF: We see our core demographic as the hardcore gamer, age 16 to 26. When we launch the box we think that those are the guys who are really on the cutting edge, they want to have the most powerful machine, they want to have the cutting-edge games. So that's who we're going to target and over time we'll broaden the audience for the box, but right at the core of the hardcore, that's were we want to be.

Ed Fries, hours after announcing the Oddworld coup, takes a couple minutes to imagine how sweet Xbox layouts will look in GR.

GR: Are you guys working on any type of mascot? Any type of recognizable character? Or are the girl and the robot in the demo your mascot?

EF: Our focus is really to make great games and we're building strong characters into a lot of the games that we're making, and whether one of those strong characters will come out and emerge as a mascot for the box we'll have to see. It took years for Crash to come out on the PlayStation and establish that role. But, yeah, there are several projects in production that have that potential.

Microsoft's new campus, known as Area Xbox, is where the visions of Team Xbox are becoming reality.

GR: So are you going to rely mostly on first-party stuff and solidify that aspect and go with that model of great first-party games like Nintendo did with Mario and Sega did with Sonic, or are you going to be more third-party driven like when PlayStation launched?

EF: There are two strong people here who are driving this aspect of the box on the software side—there's J Allard and myself. My job is to make the first-party games the best they can possibly be. While I'm out doing deals with the world's best game developers, signing up people like Oddworld to bring their great games for Microsoft to publish first-party on the box, we're also doing a lot of great internal development for the box. J Allard on the other hand, his job is to go out and work with all the third parties and to make this the best third-party platform. He thinks that we can be a lot better for third parties to work with than Sony has been.

GR: What type of role is Bill Gates playing with the Xbox?

EF: We get together and talk to him about once a month on the project. We were in his office two weeks ago and six of us sat around with him for about two hours and talked about online, where the box should go for its online future. He has a lot of thoughts about the future of the box and where he'd like to see it go. He's very involved in the project and has been from the start.

GR: How excited is he and does that filter down to the rest of the group?

EF: Well, both he and Steve (Balmer, president of Microsoft) have been super strong supporters of the box from the start. Really their roles are kind of different. Bill provides the technical and sort of visionary support for the box, saying, "Here's what I think is going to happen with DSL and cable modems in the next five years and how you should take advantage of it in the box."

GR: Is the Xbox going to be solely a platform gaming system?

EF: The box is all about games. That's what it's made for. That's the goal of it. It's not made to browse the web; it's not made to balance your checkbook or whatever. It's all about gaming. When you see it, when we get to show it, it looks like a console, it's got good game controllers that look like they're for a console, it works like a console, it doesn't boot like a PC, it doesn't act like a PC, there's no start menu.

GR: So it won't be upgradable?

EF: It's not upgradable. We think that upgrading is a bad idea in the console business. If you look at the attempts to do that in the past, they've all failed. And it's a real hassle. Y'know, I bought Perfect Dark for my N64 not too long ago and got home and found out I needed the memory expansion just to be able to play the single-player mission. What a pain. That's why we built in the hard drive. We wanted the game developers to know that the hard drive is in every box so they can really take advantage of that. Sony is saying, "Well, we're going to have this add-on later." But that doesn't help you if you're a game developer.

GR: Do you think that PC gaming is going to slowly slip away since Microsoft is going into the console business?

EF: No, I don't think so at all. I think that they're two completely different markets. I think that games are going more places, not less.

GR: So who do you feel is your direct competition? Is Sega in that mix?

EF: I think that we look at Sony as our biggest competition. They have the largest market share, but certainly all the competitors have their strengths. Obviously, Nintendo's first-party software is the best in the world. As a gamer, I love the work that they do. I always play their latest stuff. Sega, I think, has been really scrappy. I think that at E3 this year they had a great, great showing. They had a lot of good titles and they continue to introduce innovative stuff. I think that they're a very strong first-party software company as well.

GR: The list of developers you announced a couple months ago was absolutely phenomenal and made a lot of people realize this is serious. Congratulations on that end. To that extent, what are you doing to attract these companies? Is there some type of great licensing policy? Or are you covering some of the development costs up front? The Oddworld announcement is a perfect example, how did you get that exclusive?

EF: Well, obviously I can't go into too much detail about the business terms, but I'll tell you that we've known Lorne [Lanning] and Sherry [McKenna, principals of Oddworld] for a while. It would actually be best to talk to them. I'd rather have them speak for why they made the decision than to have it be hearsay when you hear it from me. But what I think is that they had this artistic vision for what they wanted to create, they had this game that they wanted to bring to life, and they had been working on PCs and could see that it was going to be possible. Then they had to try and get it to work on a PlayStation 2, and they had a lot of problems with that. And when we talked to them about the Xbox and what was going to be capable, their eyes really lit up and they really understood, "Boy, we're not going to have to make the compromises that we'd have to make for PlayStation 2." That's really the biggest reason why we were able to get together. You have to have that core, underlying goal and then the rest is just business really, putting the right deal together.

GR: What can you tell me about the physical size and design of the machine? Is it too early to ask you about the size of the machine or about the packaging or controller?

EF: I showed the final packaging to my team in our group meeting last Friday but you can't see it yet [laughs]. It was the final controller, too.

GR: Did the internal Microsoft people who developed the Sidewinder controller develop the Xbox controller?

EF: Yes. They are the people who are doing the controller and also the box design.

GR: Did they put a nice one together?

EF: Oh yes. It's very cool...very cool.

GR: Will the Xbox change the way games are made? And if so, in what way?

EF: My bigger goal is to make interactive entertainment the future of entertainment. I think that games are potentially a stronger form of entertainment than something like watching a movie or watching television.

I think we're just at the start of really making interactive entertainment have the production values and quality that's going to be needed to compete against those other forms of entertainment. Because they've been around a long time and it took a long time for them to figure out in movies how to do more than just film a play, how to take advantage of the fact that they could move the

camera and how to really bring out the elements that do suck you into a movie. It's actually kind of amazing that they can make a movie as entertaining as they can. They've learned a lot of tricks. But not only that, they've taught the audience certain things. You grow up watching movies, so the movies train you to effect certain things so that when a certain type of music is playing, you think, "Oh, it's a scary moment." All of that we're just learning in the games business right now. We just went to 3D a few years ago. And we spent the last few years struggling to learn, how do we use cameras in the games? What does 3D mean for the various genres? How do we take advantage of it? Y'know, whole new forms are coming out because of that. We're evolving the language of interactive entertainment and with something like Xbox, you're starting to get a box that's powerful enough to create images that can compete with the quality that you see on television or you see in the movies.

GR: All the current hardware companies are Japanese. Not since Atari has there been an American hardware company; 3DO doesn't count. For you personally, how do you view this whole experience? What do you feel about changing the face of gaming for the future?

EF: First of all, like most gamers, I have a huge amount of respect for what the Japanese have done. A game like Zelda, I could just go on forever about why it's so great. I think the Japanese have invested a huge amount in making some great, cutting-edge titles that have really moved the industry forward. But no matter how hard they try, when those games come to America, it's clear they weren't made here, for this audience. It's like watching a foreign film, you get a lot out of it, but you know you'd get so much more out of it if it were done for your culture. It's all of the little things that make you think, "Hmm, something's not quite right." Whether it's a few words in the dialogue or the way the characters look. To me what's the most exciting is to really be able to empower some of the great stars that there are in this country to make entertainment really for people in this country.

And so for me, that's the best part of my job. I get to go out, sort of with a big bag of money, and empower people who I believe in, where I can go to somebody like a Lorne at Oddworld and say, "I believe in you. I'm going to step in and fund the creation of what you're trying to make because I believe in what you're trying to do." So to me, that's the best part.

GR: With what you're trying to do in the industry, the excitement level you must feel when you come into work must be pretty amazing.

EF: It is. It's exciting and it's scary at the same time. I think if you were to go around and poll my group you'd find both of those things in equal measure. Just the challenge of what we're trying to do—launching a new game console, like you said, the first big effort to launch one in the U.S. since Atari. Plus half a billion dollars spent on marketing. And there's a million square feet of factory space going in to manufacture the thing.

GR: Are the systems going to be manufactured in the U.S.?

EF: No, not in the U.S. There are a couple sites around the world but we haven't announced that yet, so I can't say. But not only more than a million square feet of factory space, but there will be more than 3,000 workers at those factories. And on the first-party side, my group released 12 PC titles last year. This year, a big step up for us, we're going to release 20 PC titles. Next year we'll do about the same number of PC games, and we'll do maybe 30 Xbox games, roughly.

GR: Moving back to hardware, I thought it was smart for you to put four controller ports in the system. And I thought it interesting that the PS2 only has two controller ports.

EF: I was kind of surprised too. To make that mistake once is understandable. To make it twice...when you're the market share leader, you really have to be careful about letting some arrogance slip into what you do, ignoring the market and what the customers really want and just saying, "Well, what you want isn't what's right." And I feel a little of that with PlayStation 2. When we talk to the retailers, they see that. They're not super happy about how they've been dealt with by Sony. And when I talk to the developers, Sony hasn't been the best partner for them to work with. I think that those two controller ports are sort of an indicator of a larger problem.

GR: What do you think the Xbox is going to excel at? Will it be an amazing physics model? Or is it going to be this environmental sound technology? Or what do you think it will be that separates Xbox from everything else?

EF: To me the technical aspects are important, but games are a fusion of art and technology and people who make mistakes in making games, they go too far on one side or the other. What I mean by that is, if you just focus on the technical aspects of the game, if you just have a really strong programming team, you end up with really cool physics and not a fun game or not a game that takes you somewhere new or has something new to share with you or brings out some emotional response or has characters that you care about.

If you go too far the other way, you get into a lot of the Sillywood, the Hollywood-getting-into-games thing with all story and no game, all character and no game. You have to have a mix of both. I can talk about why we can do more millions of polygons per seconds or that we can have 256 voices or we can do true Dolby Surround Sound and nobody else can do that—all these technical aspects you'll hear later today. But really the challenge is bringing that power together with people who have a vision for how to turn that into something that's really interesting and exciting. That's why, for me, it always goes back to the designers, always back to the developers, back to the software teams. You have to have somebody like a Lorne or a Peter Molyneux with a track record and an understanding of where interactive entertainment has been and where it's going and a vision for how to take it there, and the ability to attract a great team of not only programmers but of artists

PlayStation 2

RELEASE DATE: PLAYSTATION 2 LAUNCH

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SMUGGLERSRUN

PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Angel Studios and the Angel Studios logo are trademarks of Angel Studios. Guidance Recordings and the Guidance Recordings logo are trademarks of Guidance Recordings Inc. Rockstar Games and the Rockstar Games logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. © 1999 All rights reserved.

This title is not yet approved by Sony Computer Entertainment America.

AS A MEMBER OF A RUTHLESS GANG OF SMUGGLERS, IT'S YOUR JOB TO EVADE THE U.S. BORDER PATROL, CIA AND CUTTHROAT RIVALS TO DELIVER ILLEGAL CARGO. IT'LL TAKE COMPLETE MASTERY OF YOUR OFF-ROAD VEHICLE TO MAKE IT ACROSS UNFORGIVING TERRAIN AND STAY ONE STEP AHEAD OF THE FORCES OUT TO DESTROY YOU.

DELIVER AT ALL COSTS

SMUGGLER'S RUN

- Levels are over 5 square miles, each with a "drive anywhere" environment filled with other smugglers and law enforcement officials.
- Choose from 35 different vehicles, each with unique modifications and strengths.
- Compete head-to-head or run "pick up and deliver" missions against AI opponents or in full multiplayer mode.
- Maneuver your way through arid desert, icy tundra, or rocky mountain forest.
- Real Time Damage Models allow you to watch the parts fly as you pay the price for punishing collisions!

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON GUIDANCE RECORDINGS

and put them all together in the mix and make something new and interesting. That's what's going to make the Xbox successful.

GR: What are your thoughts on Gamecube and PS2?

EF: I guess I have mixed feelings about Gamecube. I can't wait to play Shigeru Miyamoto's next game. I'm going to buy a Gamecube and I'm going to be playing those games. On the other hand, I was surprised at the styling that they chose. I thought that Nintendo was going to be a little more hardcore and be a little more mass market and when I saw the controller and I saw the box, for me as a gamer, it didn't really connect to me. Especially the controller: it looked to me more like a toy. I had that sort of toy reaction to it, rather than the thought that this is something I'd really like people to see in my living room. The other thing about Gamecube is that they've still gone to this proprietary disk format and it's smaller than a DVD and their insistence on a proprietary format seemed like it was a really limiting factor to getting lots of great games out for the N64. So I was kind of surprised that they did it again. The other problem with Gamecube, just from a power point of view, is it doesn't compare to PlayStation 2 or Xbox. I'm sure there's going to be great games because, as I said earlier, it's not all about technical power. But I don't think that you're going to get the same kind of visual or sound or other experiences that you're going to be able to get from the Xbox.

My problem with PS2 is that there isn't really a game out for it yet that I feel I really got to have. The launch lineup isn't super strong. In Sony's own first-party group, they only brought out one title here in the U.S. and that's Fantavision. That's sort of my reaction to PS2.

(After talking with Fries, I was given a tour of Area Xbox before sitting down in one of the beanbag chair-filled arcade game lounges to talk with J Allard. J Allard—it's just J with no period—is the general manager of the Xbox, in charge of, among other things, approving the third-party companies desiring to develop for Xbox. Allard is also a hardcore gamer and willing to prove it. Right after this interview, he lost $100 to Seamus Blackley in an arcade unit game of Robotron.)

GR: We hear that Final Fantasy XI is coming to Xbox and I don't know if you can comment on that or not, but we're curious to know if it's true.

JA: It's too early to talk about specific titles. So I can't officially comment on any titles.

GR: He said with a grin.

JA: [Laughs] But what I will say is that we're huge believers in online and we're also big believers that if you don't put it in the box, developers won't embrace it. So we've put networking in the box and we've put the hard drive in the box with the intent of driving online console gaming from novelty to necessity over the next five years. So if you think of a game like a Final Fantasy XI, which rumor has it is going to be online only, a massively multiplayer RPG designed for the consoles as opposed to the PC, that's a very natural fit for our platform. So whether it's Final Fantasy or games like Final Fantasy coming to Xbox, I think Xbox will be a great platform for that.

GR: Metal Gear Solid 2 has been announced for Xbox. We understand that the game is being developed for Xbox and will actually be ported down to PS2. Do you know anything about that?

JA: I can't really comment on what our partners' development strategies are specifically, but I can say generally that it is easier to scale down than it is to scale up. When I'm talking to third parties about games that they want to do on Xbox, we're looking for games that are going to shine on Xbox and really wow people and take advantage of it. And in many cases, they're dedicating entire development teams exclusively to the Xbox version to really make it whistle.

GR: We're so impressed with the list of developers you've been able to sign up for Xbox. What is it that you're doing to entice these big companies to come over? Are there nice licensing fees or are you covering development costs?

JA: I think we took a remarkably refreshing and different approach the way we designed Xbox. We basically decided up front that it was all about the games. We looked at the business model, we looked at the industry, we looked at the history and we said, "What makes or breaks a console with success in the market are the games." And we said, "Who makes the games? Well, it's the game developers." So who's our first customer? It's not the gamer, it's the game developer.

So we went out and talked with all of the game developers for nine months before Bill ever set foot on stage (at GDC), and we said, "What is your dream machine? Tell me what are you frustrated about with existing consoles? You've been in the industry for X amount of years, tell us what your experiences have been and how you would do it differently." And they led us down this path to designing Xbox.

So while Microsoft will get credit for developing, engineering, marketing and shipping Xbox, it was really the development community that defined it. So it was really the first game console ever designed by the game development community for the game development community and people are just psyched to make it whistle. I mean these guys are artists who want to realize their creative vision and you want the most powerful system you can have so that you don't run up against technology barriers. In many instances, we're finding the case that the technology in Xbox surpasses the creative vision that many of these guys have held for games and now they have to stretch and they're totally enamored by it. So they're like, "How can I make that thing whistle? What am I going to do with the hard drive and online? I haven't even thought about that being pervasive in consoles."

You go talk to the guys at Namco, for example, some of the guys in Japan who've done console games but have never done PC games, so they're not familiar with online PC games, massively multiplayer isn't something that they've thought about, and you say, "Look, it's in every box." And they say, "Wow. We've done two-cabinet and four-cabi-

net arcade games that are networked, imagine four hundred boxes networked!" So we're not really begging people or beating down their doors, they're excited about the opportunity this platform has and they think we're going to be successful.

GR: Do you guys have any criteria for the third-party companies porting existing games or can they port existing PS2, Dreamcast and PC games?

JA: We really frown on ports generally. What we're looking for are exceptional Xbox games. First and foremost we look for great games. It's about great gameplay, great and engaging storyline, great play mechanics that'll really juice gamers up about playing the games. Then the second thing we look at is how well the game takes advantage of the Xbox platform and how well it showcases the Xbox and how much it'll utilize it's potential. The third thing we look at is how viable the license is in the market or how well an existing title or franchise has done in the market or what their competition is. That's sort of the criteria. So it's really great gameplay first, followed by is it really worthwhile on Xbox.

GR: How do you think Xbox is going to change the way games are made?

JA: First, because we're using a known architecture and because the tools are compatible out of the gate, a lot of the headache of figuring out how the machine works is taken out of the equation. So the majority of the time spent in the first wave of games will really be on the content as opposed to on the engine. I think when you look further out as the engines mature more and more, and you look at the fact that we have 64MB of memory and a 5GB hard drive, I think what you're going to see three to four years down the line is its going to be truly an art-driven medium as opposed to a programmer driven medium. And that's been transitioning all along. You remember the Atari 2600, it was all programmer graphics, there were no artists, there were programmers drawing stick figures. And as it's gone on, the ratio of programmers to artists continues to change. And I think the art is really going to be the driving force in games moving forward. And I think the other thing, like I said before, online is going to go from novelty to necessity. Over the next five years, every gamer is going to demand an online component to their games and that's going to change the way game developers think about it.

GR: What are your thoughts on the PS2 and Gamecube?

JA: I'm a gamer so it's really hard to say that they're anything but great. I look at next year as being the real pivotal year. Next year we're going to have second-generation PS2 games, where developers have figured out the hardware and will start making that hardware work better and those games are going to look a lot better than this year's games. We're going to have the Gamecube with the return of Mario and they're going to fly off the shelf; Nintendo's got great properties for gamers. And we're going to introduce a new console that's just a complete bad-ass platform with games that you've never seen before that'll just blow people's minds. And I think that that collection means that 2001 will be the most important year ever for gaming and it will really help take gaming to the next level in the mass market. I think they'll become a more socially accepted form of entertainment and that the industry's going to mature a whole lot this generation. I look forward to seeing those products in the marketplace too.

GR: Final question, what's it like working for Bill Gates?

JA: [Laughs] It's a riot. The great thing about Bill is that the sky's the limit. Every time you think you've gotten to the point where Microsoft is what it is, now it's like IBM where we just do one thing but do it well. Bill is very open to people like the guys on the Xbox who really challenge conventional wisdom and say, "Hey, what if we did this crazy thing?" He's open to it. Of course, it took nine meetings before he was open to it enough where he said, "Yea, I'll get up at the GDC." But it's a great place to work and Bill's been super supportive of every project that I've worked on in the company and the Xbox is no exception. **GR**

(In part two next month, we dig into the technology of the system with Seamus Blackley, director of advanced technology, and find out how Microsoft is going to change the way we listen to games in a conversation with Chanel Summers, manager, content and design and Microsoft audio evangelist.)

Minutes after this photo was taken, J Allard got worked in a game of Robotron by Seamus Blackley and had to ante up a cool $100.

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info.

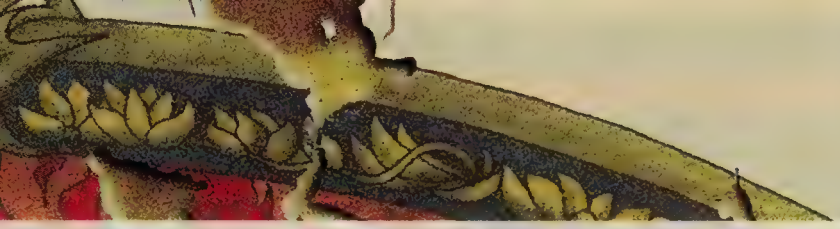
PLATINUM SERIES

Dreamcast.

GA GAME ARTS

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT
www.ubisoft.com

Licensed from ESP/Game Arts by Ubi Soft Entertainment. Original game © 2000 Game Arts. English Translation © 2000 Ubi Soft Entertainment. Grandia is a trademark of Game Arts Co., Ltd. Character designs by Youshi Kanoe. World designs by Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, LTD. All rights reserved.



"The level of detail paid to every single moment, circumstance and environment is overwhelming."
Official Dreamcast Magazine

"...undeniably the prettiest role-playing game ever to grace a console."
www.dailyradar.com

"...this will indeed be the first epic RPG on Dreamcast."
www.ign.com

"Grandia II is easily the most impressive next-generation RPG we've seen, and the first true RPG epic for a next-generation console."
www.thegia.com

"Take a new look at what is surely the best-looking RPG yet on a next-generation console..."
Gamer's Republic Online

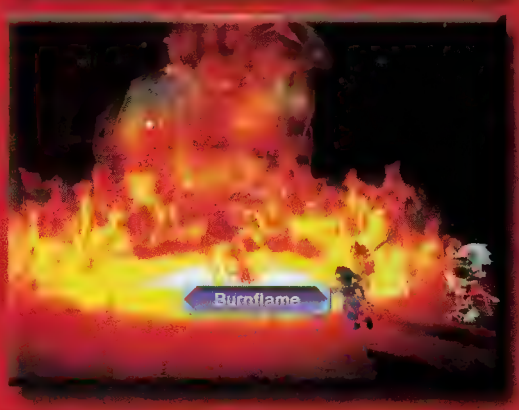
"...set to give sub-par developers a lesson in how to do a DC RPG right."
GameFan Magazine

"Any RPG fan would be insane to miss out on this fantastic gameplay experience and it could go far in converting those who previously rode the RPG fence."
GamerWeb.com

"If you want your copy of Grandia 2 this holiday season, don't expect Santa's little elves to make you a special copy, pre-order it now or you may not get it until late January."
www.GA-Console.com

Critically acclaimed and over 2 years in the making, Grandia™ II arrives December 2000.

Katsumi Aizaki and Masashi Hazama. Ubi Soft Entertainment and the Ubi Soft logo are registered trademarks of Ubi Soft, Inc. Sega,

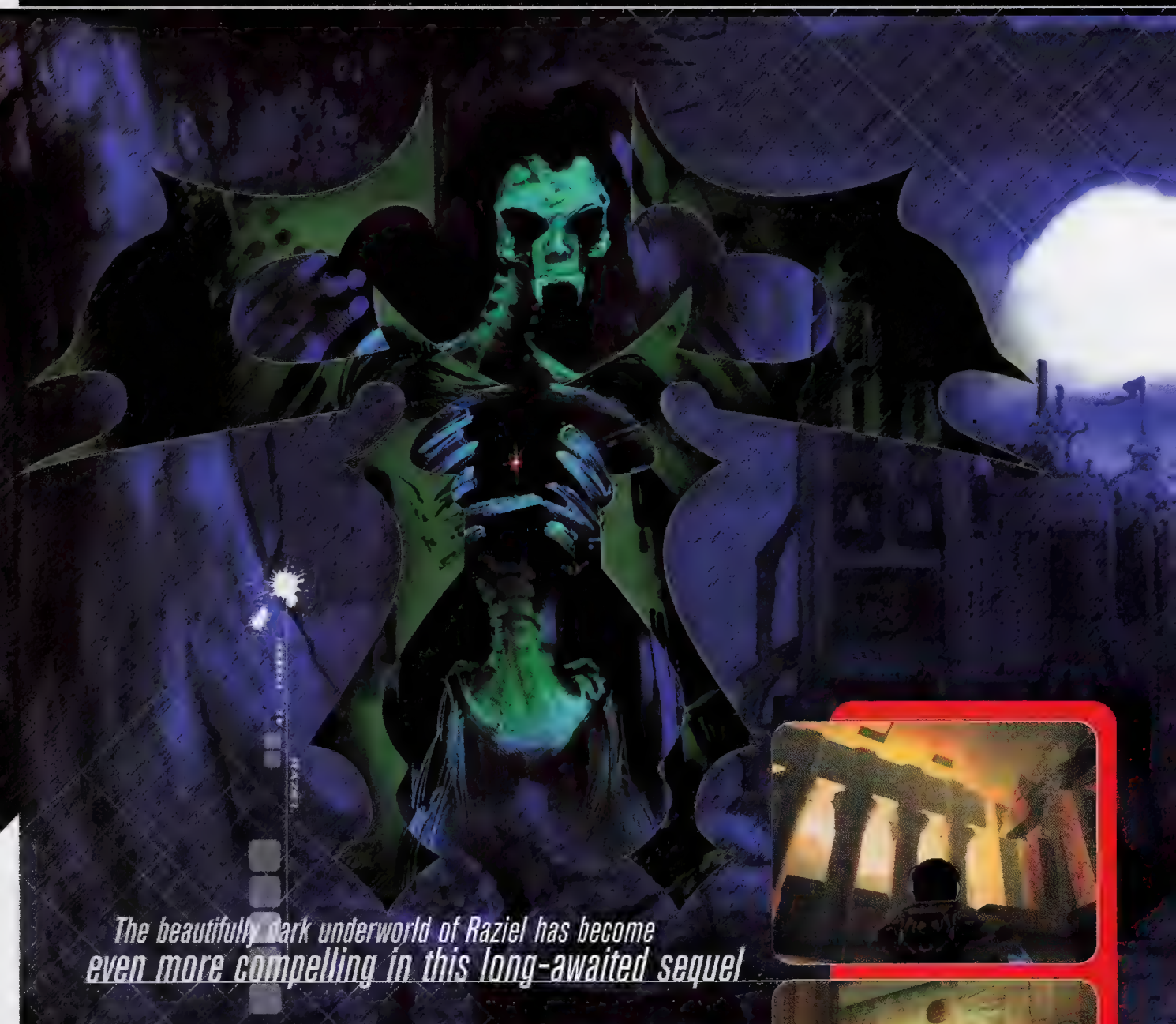


GRANDIA II™

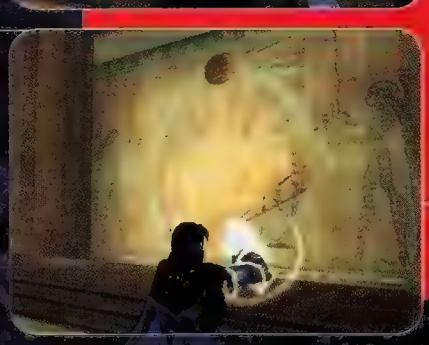
Only on Dreamcast™

LEGACY OF KAIN SOUL REAVER 2

BY BRADY FIECHTER

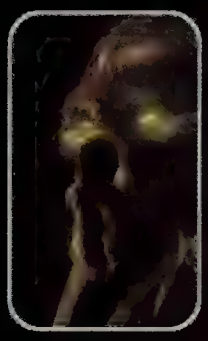


The beautifully dark underworld of Raziel has become even more compelling in this long-awaited sequel



Complex environments and robust models and detailed textures are necessary components for an impressive 3D game, but there's so much more to skilled game design than tossing around polygonal building blocks. Sure, sophistication is a good start to building an impressive looking world, but applying an individualistic touch of artistry and possessing a strong grasp of real-world design aesthetic is what can push a game ahead of the ordinary. In the magnificent Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, this idea can be seen in every piece of the game's architecture. It doesn't just look like someone went in and erected slabs of polygons; there is proper shape and form to everything, a pleasing flow to the design that is quite compelling.

Designing the game with the PlayStation in

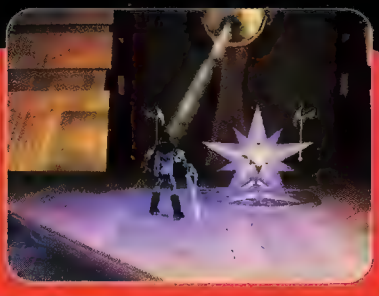


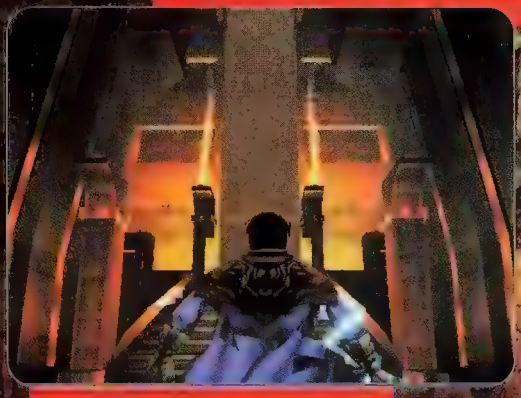
Raziel Thirsts For Redemption

mind greatly limited the Soul Reaver team, but its accomplishments were still quite extraordinary. When I spoke with project producer/director Amy Hennig back when it was just starting to come together, she commented that, "We amazed ourselves at how believable it all became... The people here are artists. They don't just extrude blocks. We said from the beginning, if we're going to do a game like this, we're going to do it with a level of architectural reality and convincingness that hasn't been done before."

What is immediately apparent about Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver 2 is that the creative ceiling has been removed, freeing Hennig and the team to produce gothic sites that are far beyond what we saw in the last game. Influenced by actual Roman and Greek structures, the levels are striking in their authentic look and feel just as much as their immense complexity. Everything is lit in pockets of pale colors, sucking the gloomy surroundings into a dense pool of visual decadence. Decorating the walls are bold flourishes of gorgeous artwork. All the dark inspiration has been suspended from Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver and simply left to bloom on Dreamcast and PlayStation 2.

Watching a newly modeled Raziel move through these compelling settings, sucking souls and searing flesh of decayed beings that look as creepy as ever is all I need to pine for this sequel's quick arrival. But patience is necessary, because the wait will be worth it: Forget last year's unsatisfying ending and feeling of incompleteness. Soul Reaver 2 is expanding its gameplay to mandate the usage of glyphs and more thorough exploration. Many of the obstacles Raziel must face before once again confronting his maker Kain are overcome by using the mind as much as brute force; gameplay focus will be similar to Soul Reaver. And returning to voice this continuing story of redemption is the unquestionably talented Michael Bell, who will lend even more dramatic flair to a game that already has all the essential pieces assembled for a soaring sequel. GR



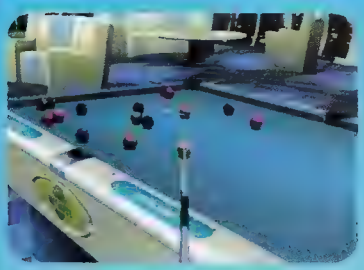


PlayStation.2

Q-Ball

BILLIARDS MASTER

Play alone or with a friend



Master the techniques used by the pros!

The most beautiful pool halls in the world!

9 modes of play, plus 3 hidden pool games!

"PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. ©2000 Take 2 Interactive. All rights reserved. Take 2 Interactive Software and the Take 2 logo are trademarks of Take 2 interactive Software.
© 2000 ASK / Shogakukan / SHO-PRO
All other trademarks and logos are properties of their respective owners.

ask

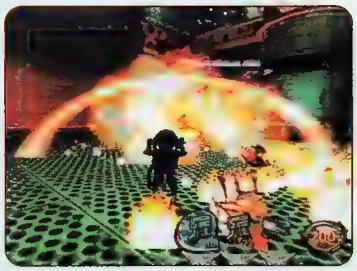
TAKE2interactive

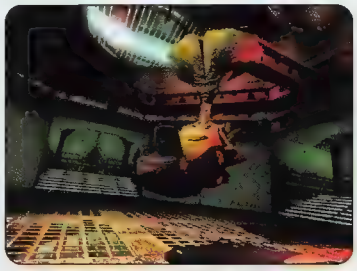
EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

MDK2

BY BRADY FIECHTER

MDK2's apocalyptic brand of destruction explodes onto the PS2. Can it get much better than the Dreamcast version?



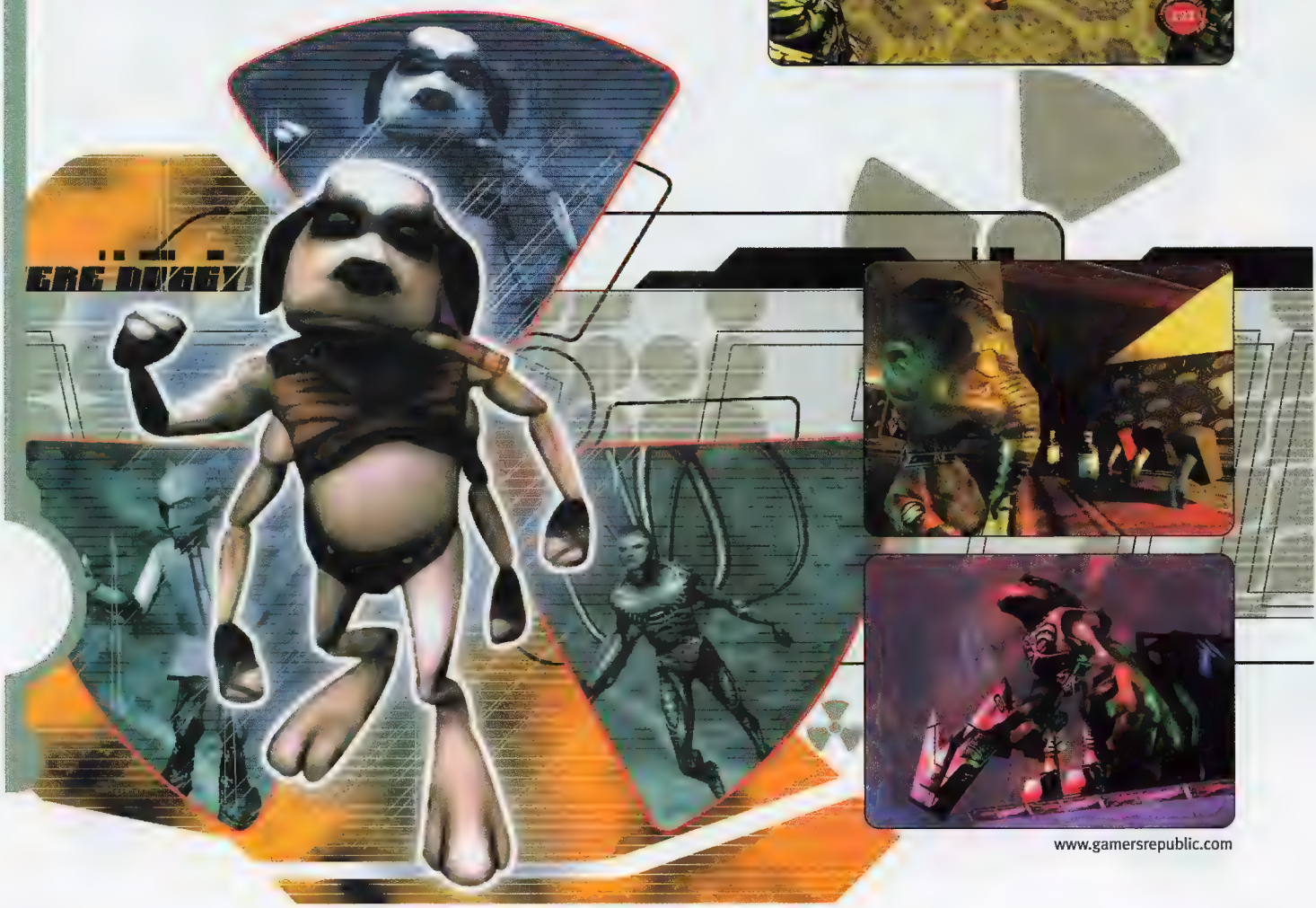


Emperor Zizzy Bulooba is pissed. Not only is he strapped to an embarrassingly emasculating name that doesn't fit his tyrannical demeanor, but he hates the universe and its pathetic inhabitants. As a take-charge kind of guy, Bulooba decides to focus his frustrations by commanding a belligerent alien race to blow up stuff and also shoot stuff.

Kurt Hectic, once a janitor, now a dubious hero, is chief of alien extermination, aided by such lethal weapons as the sniping helmet and Black Hole Bomb. Joining him in his fight for world peace is the eccentric genius, Dr. Fluke Hawkins, and his cybernetic creation Max, a six-limbed dog with guns strapped to four legs. As an intelligent man who thinks before he shoots, Dr. Hawkins splices together the most random items—magnets and duct tape for space boots, a fish bowl for a helmet—to penetrate the enemy line. His dog zips around on a jet pack and is trigger happy. Kurt also loves to shoot his big guns, but stealth becomes more of an option, and his ribbon cloak can be extended to serve as a parachute to float from platform to platform and up air currents.

The fiercely frenetic action in MDK2 takes place primarily on a futuristic Earth and an orbiting space ship, and the three characters use their unique strengths to tackle ten giant sections.

With elements of a comic-book past combined with dim visions of a surreal future, the look of the game is gorgeous and amazingly stylized. Greg Zeschuk, co-executive producer of the original Dreamcast version, has said that the team wanted "...the player to marvel at the environments in addition to having a great time playing the game." I did both, and now with the PS2 treatment of dual-analog support and adjustable difficulty levels to ease the learning curve—this game was dauntingly difficult on DC—Zeschuk's original concept will leave an even greater impact and, hopefully, find the wide audience it deserves. GR



NOW YOU CAN SHOP AT GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM !!!

> Toys and Action Figures
> Hong Kong DVD's from $19.99
> Art Books
> Wall Scrolls
> and more!

COMING SOON...

Armored Core
Jo Jo's Adventure
Trigun
Fushuqi Yuqi
Mcfarlane Anime
And the Metal Gear Collectible of a lifetime!

GR: 2000

www.gamersrepublic.com

GAMES?

www.gamersrepublic.com

HAVE ANY IDEA?

GO: WWW.GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM

PLAYSTATION, DREAMCAST, PLAYSTATION 2, GAME BOY, NINTENDO 64, X-BOX, NINTENDO GAMECUBE, GAME BOY ADVANCE...
ELETRONIC ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY
MILLENNIUM PUBLICATIONS

CUSTOMIZE

You know the rules.

PlayStation®2

湾岸 MIDNIGHT CLUB

STREET RACING

In secret gatherings around the world a mysterious group of urban street racers, known as the Midnight Club, race for pride, power and glory in sleekly customized, tricked-out sports cars. Speeding through crowded streets, running red lights, terrorizing pedestrians, driving on sidewalks and outrunning the cops are just the basics for the "Midnight Club".

- Racing action in two accurately modeled cities on both sides of the Atlantic - New York and London!
- 17 different performance enhanced cars to race - concept prototypes, foreign sports cars, muscle cars and pickup trucks.
- Play in a persistent world - with interactive traffic, pedestrians and law enforcement.
- Win the pink slips of opposing players! Rise up through the ranks in the illicit world of the Midnight Club.
- Winning cars are tuned up with equipment from street-racing specialists such as Dimmer, VeilSide, Zender, Neuspeed, Wings West and more...

Release date: PlayStation 2 Launch

www.rockstargames.com/midnightclub

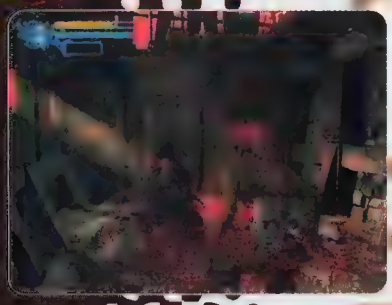
There are no rules.

Cutting edge soundtrack from some of the world's leading techno/drum and bass artists- Dom and Roland, Derrick May and Surgeon

PlayStation and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. Angel Studios and the Angel Studios logo are trademarks of Angel Studios, Rockstar Games and the Rockstar Games logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. © 2000 All rights reserved.

ONIMUSHA

BY MIKE HOBBS



What is the point of having pre-rendered backdrops on the all-powerful PlayStation 2? See above

Many thought that the advent of the PS2 would eliminate the need to create games with prerendered backgrounds. Sure, on the PS, a game like Resident Evil would not have been able to create its atmosphere with low-detail, real-time backgrounds. But on the PS2, with its vastly increased polygon handling capability, why bother with static backdrops? One look at Capcom's Onimusha and the answer is obvious. Even with the machine's capabilities, there is simply no way that the level of beauty present in Onimusha could have been achieved with a purely real-time engine, at least not yet. This is an absolutely incredible-looking game.

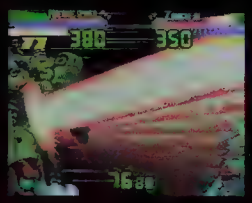
And there is more to Onimusha's beauty than just the 10,000 polygon characters and exquisitely rendered backgrounds. It's in the details that the game reveals the graphical advantages of the PS2 over the PS. For one, characters' shadows interact with the prerendered environments. Gone is Resident Evil's manhole-style shadows, replaced here by ones that stretch and curve over the scenery as you move about. And in a graphical first, parts of the characters' bodies cast shadows upon themselves. For instance, the great tusks of a beast encountered early in the game actually cast shadows onto its own torso. I've never seen that effect before. And we should expect no less when the PS2 is basically being called upon to render nothing but characters and effects.

Ultimately, it will be Onimusha's gameplay that will earn it a place among Resident Evil, and thus far, it's looking very good indeed. The Resident Evil-like control is familiar, but the hack and slash feels unique and is fantastically implemented. Quick thrusts and sweeping combinations can be executed with ease, and a Kain-like ability to extract energy from fallen foes is very satisfying.

This is a big game for Capcom, one which the company hopes will become as lucrative a series as Resident Evil. Perhaps the feudal Japanese setting will not have the broad appeal of western zombies, but the game itself will almost certainly be stellar. GR

Where fingerprints would be if controller wasn't gripped so hard.
Friction burn got after getting in Hyaog's face.
9 stitches. Exactly 12 less than I gave Qubeley.
Minor blisters earned during 8-hour marathon.
Pepperoni pizza stain from all-night tournament vs. Hydra.
Gash got going toe-to-toe against Psycho.

THE GAME IS IN 2-D. THE PAIN ISN'T. IT'S THE EPIC STORY OF GOOD VS. EVIL IN CLASSIC 2-D. YOU ARE HEERO YUY. IN YOUR FIRST VIDEO GAME EVER. YOUR JOB: USE YOUR POWERFUL WING GUNDAM TO PROTECT HUMANITY FROM THE SINISTER GIANT MOBILE SUITS. DO YOU HAVE THE BRAIN POWER AND STAMINA NEEDED TO DEFEAT THE EVIL MACHINES? OR DO WE CALL YOU MR. SOFT HANDS? GUNDAM BATTLE ASSAULT. OLD SCHOOL GAME-PLAY. NEW SCHOOL PAIN.



GUNDAM BATTLE ASSAULT™

PlayStation

BANDAI
BANDAI.COM

ROBOT AGENCY / SUNRISE / ANI. PROGRAM © 1998 BANDAI CO., LTD. TM & © 2000 BANDAI AMERICA INC. PLAYSTATION AND THE PLAYSTATION LOGOS ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS OF SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT INC.

INITIATED

ONLINE CONSOLE GAMING IS HERE!

Are you ready to serve up a big, steaming helping of humiliation to an opponent you've never even seen? Yes, there's something about the thrill of wiping the floor with a total stranger that makes the day seem brighter and the birds sing just a little louder. Take a moment to bask in the peaceful glow-then get online and kick some serious butt! Sega is the first and only company to bring you true, online, multi-player console gaming. As if that wasn't enough innovation, there's SegaNet, the first ever dedicated gaming ISP, which lets you dole out the damage in low latency peace. Check out just some of the ways you can make yourself feel superior, online and off:

{{ SEGA SPORTS NFL 2K1 }}

When you get sacked online it hurts as bad as if you were actually being leveled by a 250-pound linebacker-But this time it's your pride that hurts not your body. The sequel to the breakthrough sports title of 1999 and the first online multi-player game, "Sega Sports NFL 2K1" once again revolutionizes the sports game genre by moving the playing field online and allowing players to compete over the Internet via Sega Dreamcast. A whole new level of competition has emerged with online console gaming as the pool of opponents has dramatically increased. "Sega Sports NFL 2K1" continues to redefine superior gameplay with new features including an advanced running game, a better defensive system and the Franchise Mode that allows gamers to manage their teams over multiple seasons. Play on or offline, "Sega Sports NFL 2K1" delivers endless hours of gameplay. You may never leave the couch again- unless nature calls.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

{{ SEGA SPORTS NBA 2K1 }}

Gamers' hoop dreams have finally come true as Sega expands the basketball courts online. Forget what you learned in gym class, it's about a bag of chips, a phone cord, and a copy of "Sega Sports NBA 2K1." "Sega Sports NFL 2K1" proved to gamers that the only way to play sports games is on the Internet. Now "Sega Sports NBA 2K1" follows suit allowing gamers to taunt, chat and play their friends or foes across the country in real time using their own ISP or SegaNet. Featuring improved AI, street courts, crisper animation, more lines of commentary, added moves and the new Franchise Mode where players can draft rookies and make trades to create the ultimate team, "Sega Sports NBA 2K1" offers the most realistic basketball sim ever created.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Quake III Arena®, QUIC(TM) ©1999-2000 id Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Quake III Arena® for the Sega Dreamcast developed by Raster Productions LLC. Published and distributed by Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc. under license from Activision. Quake III Arena®, Quake® and the id® logo are registered trademarks of id Software, Inc. The id Software(TM) name and the QUIC(TM) logo are trademarks of id Software, Inc. Raster Productions(TM) is a trademark of Raster Productions. Activision® is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

Sega, Dreamcast, the Dreamcast logo, SegaSports and PHANTASY STAR ONLINE are trademarks of SEGA CORPORATION or its affiliates. © SEGA CORPORATION, 2000. All Rights Reserved. www.sega.com. © 2000 NLFP. Team names and logos are trademarks of the teams indicated. All other (NFL-related marks) are trademarks of the National Football League and NFL Properties. Officially licensed product of PLAYERS INC. The PLAYERS INC logo is a registered trademark of the NFL players. www.nflplayers.com © 2000 PLAYERS INC. The NBA and individual NBA member team identifications used on or in this product are trademarks, copyrighted designs and other forms of intellectual property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective NBA member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without prior written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. © 2000 NBA Properties, Inc. All rights reserved. The SegaNet logo is a trademark of SEGA.com, Inc. and may not be used in whole or in part without the express written permission of SEGA.com. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

PLAYERS INC

{{ QUAKE III ARENA }}

The eternal battle- Which is better, PC gaming or console gaming? Now the battle moves online with Quake III Arena for Sega Dreamcast. In another first for the videogame industry, Quake III Arena is the first game to allow multiplayer real-time networked gaming between Sega Dreamcast and PC players. Featuring new arenas and a redesigned user interface, Quake III Arena pits players against each other in an action-packed, free-for-all environment. Prowling through hallways and courtyards in gothic arenas and futuristic spacescapes, players will have endless options on and offline to keep them in the game.

MATURE M

{{ PHANTASY STAR ONLINE }}

Prepare yourself for the ultimate online gaming experience. Revisiting the renowned "Phantasy Star" series, the first fully networked console-based RPG, "Phantasy Star Online," will connect gamers worldwide in a sci-fi fantasy universe featuring detailed 3D labyrinths and vast free-roaming landscapes. Players from around the globe will unite online via SegaNet to communicate and participate in various adventures in an online community unlike any other. Developed by Yuji Naka and his Sonic Team, "Phantasy Star Online" will revolutionize worldwide online console gameplay by breaking down the barriers of culture and language.

COMING SOON!

RATING PENDING RP

SEGANET

We know you want the best online gaming experience possible, and that means the lowest possible latency. SegaNet is the only high-speed console gaming network and ISP, which makes for a totally optimized gaming experience. Don't just take our word for it, anyone who owns a Dreamcast and has SegaNet enabled games such as "Sega Sports NFL 2K1" and "Quake III Arena" can sign up for 50 free hours on SegaNet. Each game will walk you through the sign-up process. SegaNet members will also have exclusive access to contests, sweepstakes and special offers in addition to the best online gaming action.

The process is simple and easy. Plug in your Dreamcast, plug in the phone cord, sign up for SegaNet, and let the online games begin. You can register with your PC via www.sega.com or through the Dreamcast console using the latest browser or online games.

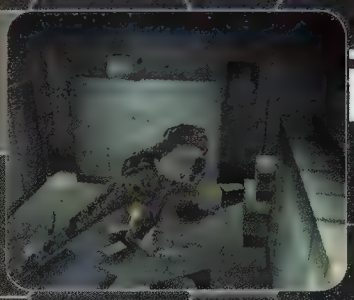
If you decide to sign up for 18 months on SegaNet for $21.95 per month, you will get a check for $150- the cost of the Dreamcast hardware- and a free keyboard.

If you have questions regarding SegaNet, check out the web site at www.sega.net or call 1.866.SEGA.NET

ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER

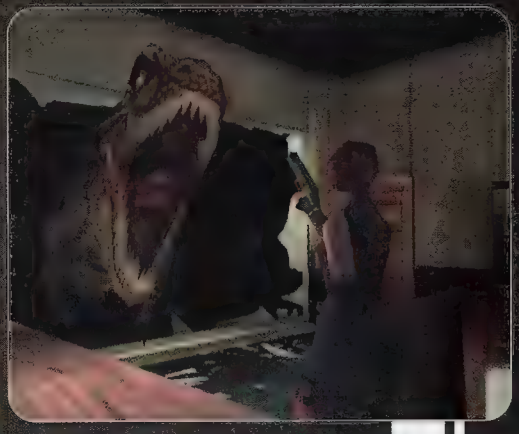
SEGA

SYSTEM READY FOR SHUTDOWN



BAD DREAMSCAST

BY BRADY FIECHTER



Dino Crisis and Resident Evil 2 and 3 creep onto the DC essentially unchanged, but the thrill remains

As I stood in line to buy the special edition, three-disc set of Pixar's marvelous Toy Story 1 and 2, a gentlemen in front of me was intent to point out that I was spending 20 dollars extra for the third disc, and he made sure to show me that he had in his hand the more sensible purchase. "Are you aware that you can buy the complete set without that extra part?" he asked with care and concern. I responded with a polite smile and inward annoyance, "Yeah, thanks, but I love these movies, and I'm a collector."

Maybe next year Disney will release an even more special Special Edition set, and then I can buy that one too, and get the same blank stare from those buyers that just don't get it.

Thankfully, I get it. And that's why I'm enthusiastic about Capcom's decision to release Dreamcast versions of Dino Crisis and Resident Evil 2 and 3, at half their original PlaySta-

tion price. They're collector's items, an excuse for the unbridled enthusiast to relive the thrilling gameplay and be consumed once again by the dark and gruesome imagery in an oh-so-slightly better form.

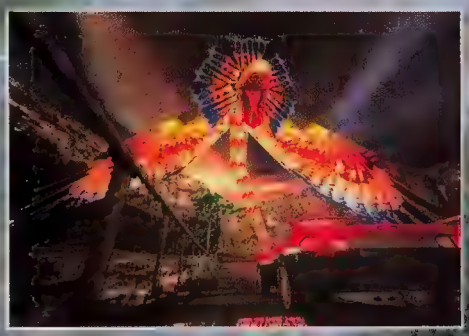
For the gamer who cares about new, minor gameplay modes Capcom has added a few extra, ultimately superfluous options to all three titles, skimping on cosmetic doctoring by doing little more than allowing the DC to soften the 3D—no added details, no dynamic lighting, no improved character models. Oh well. A little generosity in the transport to Sega's immensely more powerful hardware would have, of course, been nice, and Capcom will be criticized for grabbing these games directly off the PlayStation assembly line, but I'm still satisfied to have some of my favorite games looking and feeling as good as ever.

As a fully 3D game, Dino Crisis benefits the most from the port, with the environments solidifying and getting a nice buff and polish from the Dreamcast hardware, and playing it again felt surprisingly fresh. The same can't be said about the Resident Evil games, but I was still thoroughly engrossed for the, let's see, fifth or sixth time. Resident Evil 3 is arguably the best of this bunch, with Dino Crisis coming in a close second with its heart-pounding dinosaur encounters and ceaselessly involving puzzles.

Sticking a score on these games seems unnecessary. All three would make the top of a list of my favorite PlayStation games, and now they're on Dreamcast, spine intact. You either get it or you don't. GR

Speed Devils
ONLINE RACING

Attention, sinners. The most infernal arcade racer ever now runs online. All the hellish tracks, tricked out cars, and shady side bets from the original Speed Devils return – plus 11 new cars, and 21 new ways to put your hard-earned cash, car, and street rep on the line. Hey, leave the "legal" sports for those cornfed boys down the street. SegaNet just got itself a red light district.



SEGANET

ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER

EVERYONE E ESRB

Dreamcast™

Ubi Soft ENTERTAINMENT

www.ubisoft.com

©2000 Ubi Soft Entertainment, Inc. Speed Devils and Ubi Soft Entertainment are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment, Inc. Ubi Soft and the Ubi Soft logo are trademarks of Ubi Soft Entertainment, Inc. Sega, the Sega logo, Dreamcast, and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, LTD. All rights reserved. Unauthorized copying, adaptation, rental, or public performance of this game is prohibited. Developed by Ubi Soft Entertainment, Inc. Ubi Soft Entertainment, Inc., 625 Third Street, 3rd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94107. Made and printed in the U.S.A. Patents pending in the U.S. and other countries. For more information about this and other titles, please visit our website at www.ubisoft.com. Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega, Dreamcast, and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation. All rights reserved. Unauthorized copying, adaptation, rental, or public performance of this game is prohibited.

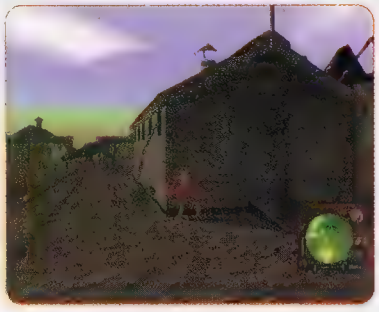
THE HIGHWAY TO HELL NOW ONLINE.
ROUTE
666

0 31441 07950

CHICKEN RUN

preview by c. hoffman • dev: blitz games ltd. • pub: eidos • avail: nov

Are you chicken? You will be when you play Chicken Run, an adventure-game version of this past summer's claymation flick. Just like the PS version of the game, Chicken Run on DC lets you play as Rocky, Ginger, and some assorted side characters as you attempt to escape the farm and avoid winding up on the dinner table. Most of the game involves exploring the farmyard as you collect various items necessary to escape (butter knife, old boots, etc.), but you need to keep an eye on your radar so you don't get caught by dogs or farmhands. Numerous mini-games, like firing chickens to safety with a slingshot, or feeding hens and collecting eggs, also break up the action. With its Metal Gear stylings and comic character design, Chicken Run looks like a very solid game in the making. If this movie adaptation lives up to its potential, being chicken will be a good thing. **GR**



DANCE DANCE REV.

preview by b. fiechter • dev/pub: konami • avail: jan

Put aside your inhibitions and convince yourself you don't look like an awkward gimp and you'll be having an exhaustingly good time with Konami's Dance Dance Revolution. In this dancing game fueled by over 30 infectiously bubbly pop songs, you step to the beat and falling arrows that point you to the four positions on the dance pad-up, right, down, left. It's that simple. Well, not really. Play it, and you'll understand just what kind of game it takes to send your heart racing and have you sweating till you stink like a pig. And if indeed you've eaten too much bacon and sausage for breakfast, go into workout mode and track your calories burned. Don't worry: exercise can be fun. **GR**

EVIL DEAD

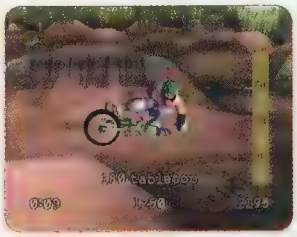
preview by b. fiechter • dev: heavy iron studios • pub: thq • avail: winter

Now that some of you have a PS2 and need to break in the DVD player, go buy Evil Dead and Army of Darkness, two of the coolest really bad horror movies around. You'll marvel at the acting chops of Bruce Campbell and be ready to better consume THQ's upcoming Evil Dead game. Campbell has graciously provided his droll vocal inflections to spice up his onscreen likeness and charge the CG scenes with signature Dead humor. Many of the enemies and locations are pulled from the Evil Dead films, so screwing this one up would take some ineptitude. Big time. **GR**

DAVE MIRRA BMX

preview by d. halverson • dev: z-axis • pub: acclaim • avail: december

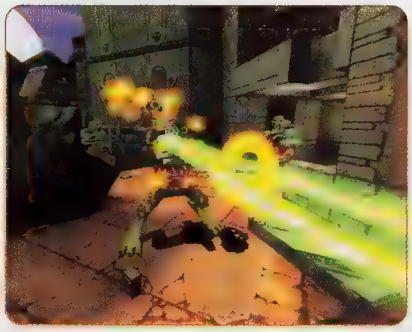
Mirra BMX is starting to really make me angry, mostly because it's a game bulging with potential that I really wanted to get behind, especially on the Dreamcast. You'd think that the producers and developers would use the DC's power to improve where the PS game faltered—skewed viewpoints, clipping, and glitchy collision—but at 85 percent complete, this has to be one of the worst looking ports I have seen so far. The pop-up and textures are unforgivable for a Dreamcast game, and the control and camera are exactly the same. But most surprisingly at this juncture, the game is actually slower!? The DC can toss these environments around (host to one conservatively modeled rider) at 60 frames with ease. So then why is the game hovering below and at 30? With these graphics anything less than 60 will be unacceptable. Sadly, what promised to be one of the year's best extreme sports offerings looks to be pedaling toward the discount bin before it's even released. Fifteen percent never seemed like such a long way to go. **GR**

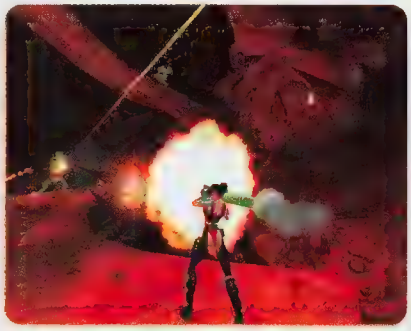


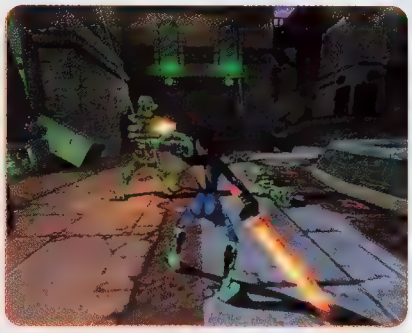
HEAVY METAL FAKK 2

preview by **d. halverson** • *dev:* **ritual** *pub:* **G.O.D.** • *avail:* **december**

Here's a Dreamcast game that's been a long time in coming but will ultimately prove more than worth the wait. Ritual's Heavy Metal FAKK 2 takes place many years after the CG-animated movie left off, with Julie Strain (FAKK2) carving up Lord Tyler (Michael Ironside) and his bid for immortality. On her way back to her home-world, Eden, Julie picked up enough galactic strays and misfits to rebuild the colony that Tyler so viscously laid to waste and erect a powerful energy shield—should the FAKK (Federation Assigned Kitogenic Killzone) beacon that failed them the last time fail again. How do they look so young after all those years? Trace elements of a compound that once threatened the entire galaxy runs through the rivers of Eden. It's a long story (available now on DVD!) that I strongly suggest as a companion piece while you await the game's arrival. Imagine a one-player game, years in the making, that shreds Tomb Raider along with brand new deathmatch arenas for the Dreamcast and three hours of Heavy Metal-inspired music and it's easy to see—FAKK 2 will undoubtedly go down as one of the year's very best. We hope to bring you a hands-on Dreamcast preview in the January issue. **GR**







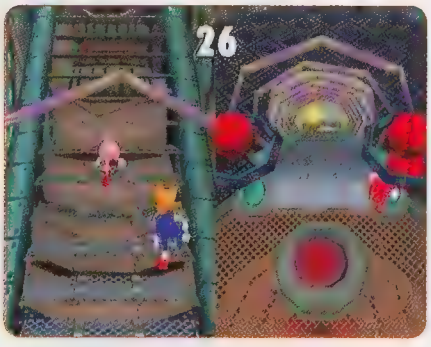
SONIC SHUFFLE

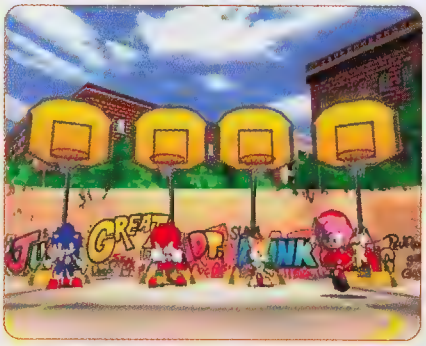
preview by **m. hobbs** • *dev/pub:* **sega** *avail:* **december**

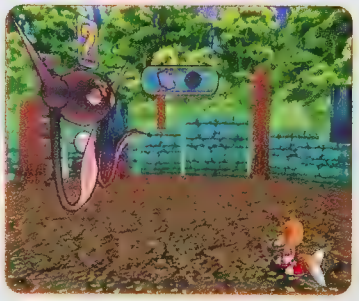
We never did get a proper Sonic kart racing game on Dreamcast (or for that matter, any good kart racer), but that doesn't mean that Sega is averse to aping Nintendo when it comes to game concepts. Taking a page from Nintendo's Mario Party series, Sonic Shuffle is a four-player 3D board game featuring a selection of new and old Sonic characters. But going MP one better, SS will offer online play capabilities.

Though we haven't been able to test network play as of yet, we did have a few multiplayer sessions, and discovered that outside of broad similarities to Mario Party, Sonic Shuffle is a very different game. For starters, characters move around the board not by rolling dice, but by selecting numbered cards, either from one's own stash, or from another player, though in that case, the numerical value is hidden until selected. From here, the characters begin moving about the board, encountering bounce pads, ring subtracters, shops, precious stones (four which need to be collected to win), and of course, mini games. The cornerstone of Mario Party's wild fun, Sonic Shuffle's games are generally less about fast button mashing and more about using strategy. Some events, however, are just plain lame. There's this one game in particular, in which the four players must play guitar on stage whenever the spotlight hits them, but the playing amounts to simply holding a button down until the light goes off. This is a far cry from some of Mario Party's inspired, fast action events.

Sonic Shuffle will certainly have an edge over Mario just because of the online play, but whether it's a better offline game will be difficult to prove. I can tell you now that Mario Party has the better mini games. Time will tell on this one. **GR**







R2
E.HONDA
8
19
L1
L2

TIME TO SETTLE THE SCORE ONCE AND FOR ALL.

FREE

CAPCOM® VS. SNK™

Two monster corporations at war. One solution.
A massive martial arts event, Millennium Fight 2000, is organized to settle the score and eliminate all conflict between the two parties. Many of the world's most famous warriors have joined and the public is going mad with anticipation. Join over 25 brawlers from Capcom's legendary Street Fighter and SNK's world-renowned King of Fighters series' as they fight for universal domination. Capcom vs. SNK…the ultimate collision of strength and power.

CAPCOM
CAPCOM.COM

TEEN T ESRB
Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

Dreamcast™

©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2000 ©CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2000 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ©SNK 2000. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM logo are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. CAPCOM VS. SNK MILLENNIUM FIGHT 2000 is manufactured and distributed by CAPCOM CO., LTD. under license from SNK Corporation. SNK is a trademark of SNK Corporation. Sega, Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, Ltd. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association.

0 31441 07950

PS2 | PlayStation | Dreamcast | NINTENDO 64

CARMICHAEL 2002

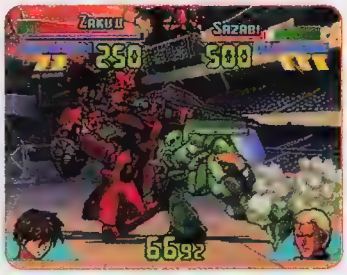
preview by d. halverson • dev: pacific power and light • pub: thq • avail: tba

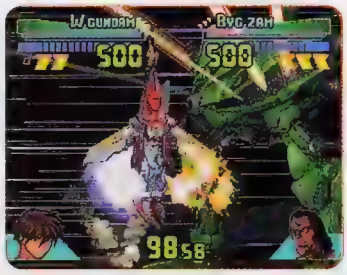
Coming off of their second installment of Ricky Carmichael Championship Motocross for the PlayStation—a marked improvement over the original—TH•Q is already well underway on Carmichael 2002, the first Motocross game for the PS2. Very little information has been released, although we know the game is in the hands of Pacific Power and Light rather than the team at Funcom responsible for the first two offerings in the series. It will be interesting to see if the actual physics of motocross can finally be nailed down now that the hardware is there to achieve realistic terrain and conditions. Judging by these shots the game is still quite early and as you can see only fictitious tracks are on display. We'll of course keep you up to date on the game's progress as it draws closer to becoming playable. **GR**

GUNDAM BTL. ASSAULT

preview by m. hobbs • dev/pub: bandai • avail: december

After years and years of success in Japan, Gundam is finally starting to catch on in the States thanks to the airing of Gundam Wing. As such, games like Gundam Battle Assault, available for quite some time in Japan, are making their way over.





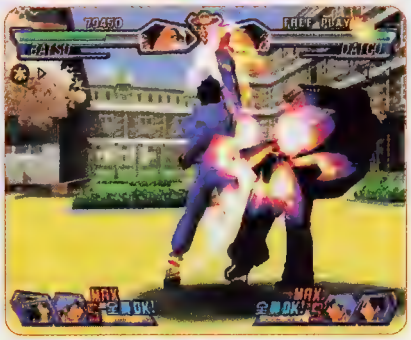
In this novel-looking 2D fighter, characters from several different Gundam series clash one-on-one. Zeta Gundam, Gundam Wing, and Zaku II are just some of the combatants on hand, and all are rendered in a very unique animation style. Foregoing traditional 2D animation techniques, characters here are constructed of separate animated and rotating sprites, lending a nice smoothness to their overall movements. This technique also imparts a rather pixely look as well, especially as the game zooms in and out, but the overall effect is distinctive and effective.

The play is a little sluggish, but there are interesting touches, like the ability to sidestep into the background to dodge attacks, and overall, the game feels pretty good. Just don't expect a Street Fighter-like sophistication or depth. **GR**

PROJECT JUSTICE

preview by c. hoffman • dev/pub: capcom • avail: january

Rival Schools returns as Project Justice on Dreamcast! While retaining its Street Fighter EX gameplay, this third game in the series has received a massive graphic overhaul. Though the floors are still disconnected from the walls, Tekken style, the backgrounds are now in 3D, and the characters have been completely rebuilt. Even though they won't exactly put Namco to shame, they're at least on par with the characters in Capcom's other 3D Dreamcast offerings. Speaking of characters, Project Justice has plenty. Even in incomplete form, the game has 15, including returning fighters like Akira, Tiffany and Batsu. But there are also some strange new fighters like Nagare, the swimmer whose special attack forces you to perform synchronized swimming! Like its predecessor, Project Justice has loads of awesome double-team moves, but now there's a counter where your opponent calls in his partner and they battle to see if you get to use your attack or not. Another plus is Project Justice's vast number of modes, including a tournament, a character editor, a story mode, and an "omake" mode, although none of these were playable in our preview version. Other than the game playing just a bit stiff, Rival Schools fans should love Project Justice. **GR**



TOP GEAR DAREDEVIL

preview by **m. hobbs** • *dev/pub* **kemco** • *avail:* **winter**

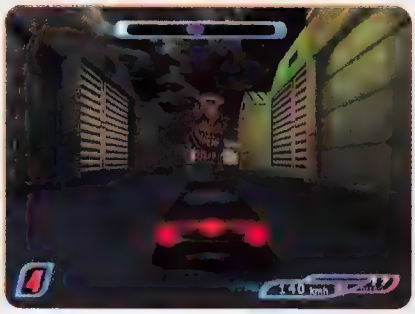
Reminding me a bit of Climax's Super Runabout for Dreamcast, Kemco's Top Gear Daredevil for PS2 capitalizes on the inherently fun concept of crashing through densely populated city streets with abandon. Featuring fantastic graphics and a hugely appealing selection of small Japanese and European city cars, TGD has great aesthetic flair, even if its basic structure is not as compelling as that of Super Runabout, which featured humorous and wildly varied mission objectives. Here the basic goal is to race around the city collecting a certain amount of tokens within a time limit, snatching valuable nitro boosts and time bonuses along the way. And good game tuning is already in evidence, as I always managed to snatch the last token and reach the exit box just as the dying seconds ticked away. We'll see how the final comes together. **GR**

SPEED DEVILS ONLINE

preview by **b. fiechter** • *dev/pub:* **ubi soft** • *avail:* **december**

You just know a tidal wave of online racing games is soon to come crashing down on the Sega Dreamcast Network, and it's going to take more than just the attraction of Web competition to weather the storm of discriminating buyers. One of the first of these games to be available is Speed Devils Online Racing, an update to the Dreamcast PC port of Speed Devils. The title points to the game's key feature: online play, with up to five cars sharing the course at once. As a pure arcade racer, Speed Devils Online doesn't have a huge learning curve or demanding physics routine, just straightforward racing in treacherous settings, like a stormy Louisiana—watch out for the tornado—and lively Hollywood—a dinosaur and King Kong roam the set.

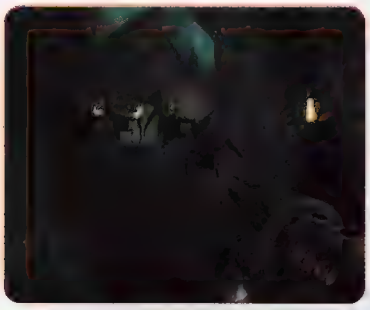
Getting up and racing takes little effort, but upgrades to cars with the money earned from races ensure that you'll be more than a minor distraction on the course. Twenty-two different cars can be customized and traded online, and money for enhancements can be won from bets. **GR**

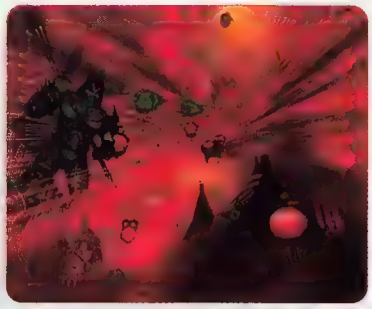


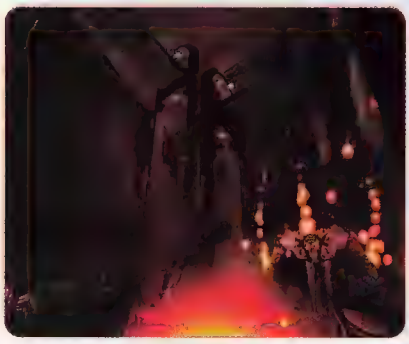
KISS PSYCHO CIRCUS

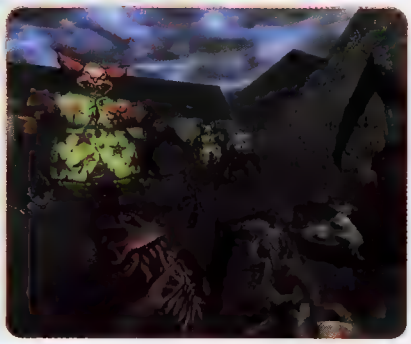
preview by **d. halverson** • *dev:* **third law** *pub:* **god** • *avail:* **winter**

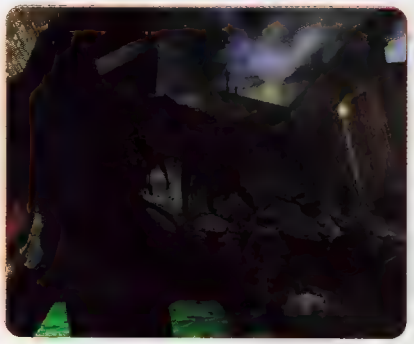
The buzz surrounding Kiss' first original album to feature all of the original members since before you were born—capped by a packed Millennium eve concert—is now a distant memory. Still, the magazine and merchandise, both fashioned by über-manufacturer Todd McFarlane, along with the untimely release of the Psycho Circus game, will no doubt help fans cool their jets (and wash off the rest of their face paint) during the band's current between-projects status. Of course, SegaNet won't hurt this bad boy either. The game, which features a one-player game where you explore four hellish realms as the four KISS elders, draws its appeal from some truly wicked and diabolical character and weapon designs. And the deathmatch mode, a stomach-churning haunted carny freak-fest, hosts some of the most insane multiplayer action this side of a 12-inch tongue. Lick it up on Dreamcast this Christmas. **GR**











0 31441 07950

KENGO

preview by k. kencade • dev: lightweight • pub: crave • avail: winter

Following in the unique footsteps of Bushido Blad, Kengo: Master of Bushido is a sword-based fighting game in which your typical approach to combat is quite altered. In the single-player game, three characters can be selected, each possessing individual characteristics, storylines and styles. Victory is rewarded with new swords and improved fighting technique, and you're also in control of improving your warrior's abilities, which include physical strength, attack speed, move speed, avoidance and mental strength.

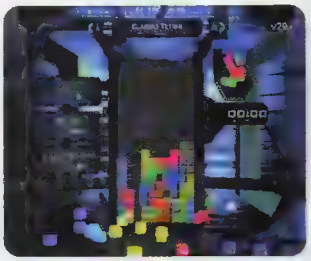
One of the flaws in the first game was its limited visual presentation, but thanks to the PlayStation 2, the expansive battle locations are amazingly more satisfying. Over 20 different settings can be selected, from dojos and gardens to ocean and river areas.

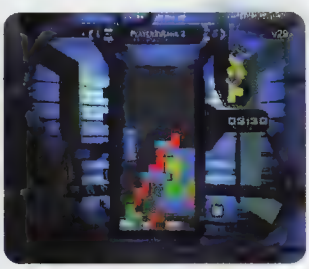
The dynamics of the level design are still a work in progress, but realism is a major focus to the gameplay. A single strike to vulnerable areas can be lethal, so a continual defense is a big part of the strategy. Much of the game is loosely patterned after actual swordsmen and their techniques during the Edo period. GR

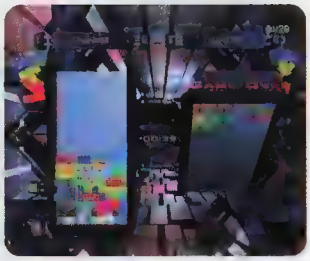
THE NEXT TETRIS

preview by c. hoffman • dev: blue planet software • pub: crave • avail: november

The most addictive, popular puzzle game ever is coming to Dreamcast. Not straying much from the traditional block-dropping formula, The Next Tetris on Dreamcast offers two main modes of play: Tetris Classic, with the original rules, and The Next Tetris, where the goal is to clear piles of garbage blocks from the screen. Blocks can also come apart in Next mode to create massive combos. However, the big reason to pick up this version of the venerable classic is its online play (which we unfortunately couldn't experience at this time). TNT also has a split-screen mode for multiplayer action without the 'net. GR



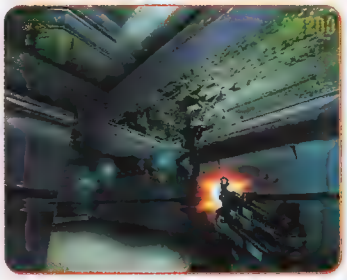




RED FACTION

preview by b. fiechter • dev: volition • pub: thq • avail: winter

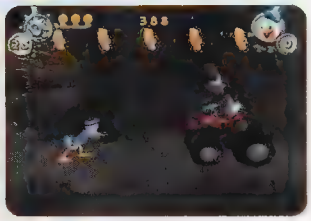
All hail the intensity of single-player first-person shooters. Just when I thought deatmatch-only games would rule the console FPS universe, Red Faction comes around to put a smile on my face. THQ has said that the game will not look past the importance of story, which makes me even happier; Medal of Honor has shown that these games benefit immensely from telling a tale around the incessant violence and shooting. An emphasis is being placed on a complex physics engine and all sorts of really cool-sounding technical innovations that mean nothing until the final game is in my hands. Controllable vehicles and organic level design are some of the highlights. GR



DONALD DUCK

preview by d. halverson • dev/pub: ubi soft • avail: tba

Ubi soft is going all the way with the Donald Duck license with Goin' Quackers for the Gameboy Color, N64 and Dreamcast and what appears to be an entirely new game for the newly launched PS2. Besides the obvious graphic refinements the PS2 version is undergoing there's no official word yet on exactly how the game differs from the Nintendo 64 and Dreamcast versions but it's obvious judging by the screens that the game is pretty much a completely original effort. I guess the masters at Ubi already have a PS2 engine good to go. GR



gamers' republic REVIEWS

GAME OF THE MONTH

FINAL FANTASY IX

dev: square • pub: square/ea

Forget about your Dreamcasts and PlayStation 2s for a few weeks and marvel at Square's masterpiece.

GAMES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE

Domestic Reviews

Bangai-O	A
Breath of Fire IV	B+
Buzz Lightyear	D+
Capcom vs. SNK	A-
DOA2 Hardcore	B+
Donald Duck	B
Dynasty Warriors 2	B
Emperor's New Groove	B
Fantavision	B
Final Fantasy IX	A
Grandia II	A
Incredible Crisis	B-
Jedi Power Battles	C+
Jet Grind Radio	A
Kessen	B+
Looney Tunes Racing	C+
Looney Tunes Space Race	B+
Midnight Club	B+
Metropolis Street Racer	A
Quake III	A-
RC de Go!	B-
Ready 2 Rumble 2	B
Real Pool	B
Red Dog	B+
Samba de Amigo	A-
Shenmue	B-
Sky Odyssey	B
Spider-Man	B
Summoner	D+
Surfing H3O	B-
Test Drive: Le Mans	A-
Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2	A
Torneko	C+
UFC	C+
WCW Backstage Assault	F
Woody Woodpecker	D+
WWF No Mercy	B+
WWF SmackDown! 2	B

Sports Reviews

ESPN NBA 2Night	D+
Gameday 2001	C
J&L Stockcar	C+
Mike Tyson Boxing	C
NASCAR 2001	D+
NBA 2K1	A
NCAA FF 2001	C+
Sega Marine	A-

Handheld Reviews

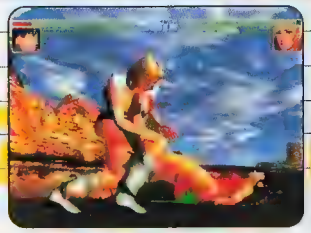
Dexter's Lab	C
Little Nicky	B
Pokemon Gold/Sil.	B-
Yogi Bear	B

Import Review

Suiko Gaiden Vol. 1	B

DEAD OR ALIVE 2 HARDCORE

BY BRADY FIECHTER



Namco and Sega aren't the only ones crafting superb 3D brawlers. Tecmo's stands up to the best

While I still believe Soul Calibur is the first 3D fighting game to fully tap the majestic flow and energy that powers some of the best 2D fighting games, Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore shares some of the same qualities that elevate Namco's fighter to masterpiece status. There is a rhythm and balance to the matches in Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore that is frenetic but composed, a forceful display of balletic movements that can be exhilarating. Increasingly uncovering the intricacies of the fighting system yields a unique, deeply satisfying game.

Coming to grips with the reversal system is central to the DOA2 experience. This dominant technique is what most separates the game from other 3D fighters, and it does take time to find the proper rhythm that can quickly swing the balance of the game. Button mashing is the initial tendency, but a quick study will reveal that catching and reversing your opponent's attack, depending on his position of offense, is paramount.

While impressive in form and animation, something about the DOA2 cast of fighters has always left me a bit cold, and as much as I admire the detail and care that has gone into building this game, I find that that special charge igniting Capcom and Namco's best is missing. This is not to say that DOA2: Hardcore is not visually pleasing; some of the levels are striking—the sun-drenched Hong Kong rooftop stage that moves into the gritty rain-soaked streets below; the beautiful backdrop of fireflies and a weathered dojo in front of a waterfall spilling into a shallow lake. The stages also take on an added dynamic of convincing 3D space, heightened by the ability to crash through barriers to lower levels and interact with walls and other parts of the stage. It's a visually rich, densely colorful game, and with the five new stages, new costumes and assortment of new moves, Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore is worth the attention of anyone who calls himself a fan of 3D fighting games. GR

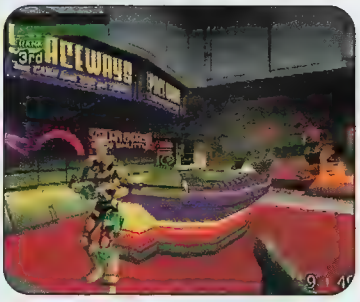
- GREAT SENSE OF 3D SPACE; RICH VISUALS
- SO FAST AND FLOWING
- BREAK THROUGH WALLS AND FLOORS
- NOT A HUGE FAN OF THE CHARACTERS

REPUBLIC SAYS... I NORMALLY DON'T LIKE TO COMPARE GAMES, BUT BECAUSE THIS IS A LAUNCH TITLE UP AGAINST TEKKEN, MY MONEY'S ON NAMCO'S BRAWLER. DIFFERENT GAMES, BOTH SUPERB.

B+

TIMESPLITTERS VS... UNREAL TOURNAMENT

BY BRADY FIECHTER

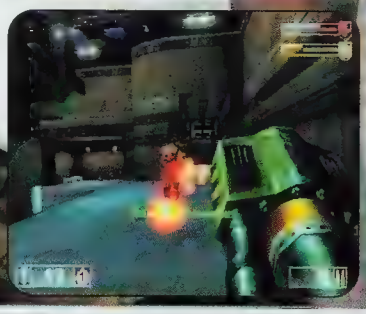


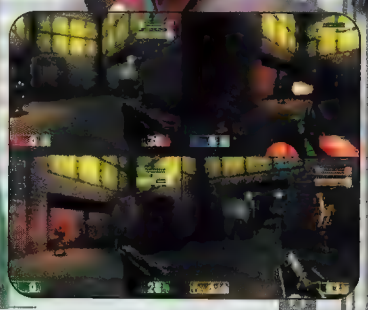
Warning: the following first-person shooters contain scenes of explicit violence. They contain guns (really cool guns) that cause death and destruction (really cool death and destruction). The object of both games is to kill with impunity. You will find yourself using foul language and delighting in the death toll of your friends as your kill meter increases in deathmatches.

If you wisely choose to play Time Splitters, you also are exposed to partial nudity and suggestive sexual situations, because some of those female characters like to moan and shake it a bit if you select them as your instrument of death. Once in battle, these fearless sharpshooters lose all manner of personality, controlling like all the rest of the skillfully detailed, uniquely designed characters—fast, smooth, a bit sensitive to the touch but extremely maneuverable. Taking place in incredibly sharp and hugely appealing locations that reach into fantasy aesthetics of the past, present and future, Time Splitters is intense and superbly crafted, showcasing the obvious talent for FPS design the Free Radical team brings with it from working on the classic GoldenEye.

What both Unreal Tournament and Time Splitters lack is a dedicated, deeply involving single-player experience. Buy these games for the hours and hours of multiplayer chaos, but beware: Unreal Tournament's frame rate collapses in four-player splitscreen, greatly dissipating the energy level. It's a shame, because this game would rock if it looked as good as the PC version, but instead we get disappointing texture quality and clumpy movement. Still, the game looks good and has a strong atmosphere, and the level and weapon design—it's so devilishly satisfying to explode an opponent with the rocket launcher—are unmatched, infusing enough strength into Unreal Tournament's weaker points to support an engaging FPS experience.

The more I play both these games, the more I like them. But Time Splitters is just so smooth, crisp and much more playable in multiplayer that it reigns victorious. And with the extensive level editor, you'll never get tired of building new scenarios in which to inflict incessantly violent acts. GR





Part adventure game, part flight simulator, Sky Odyssey is the PS2's answer to Nintendo's venerable Pilotwings

I reckon every system needs a Pilotwings-style game. The Dreamcast has the curious yet oddly satisfying Aero Wings series, and for PS2 we have this, Sky Odyssey, a classy and attractive entry in the task-based flight genre.

With an engaging mix of realism and fantasy, Sky Odyssey presents itself as something of an adventure game, with each new level leading you closer and closer to the goal of finding the ancient lost city. This is accomplished through the cleverly conceived missions, which basically ask you to get from point A to point B through various challenges and obstacles. In an early mission, you've got to fly low and attach to a refueling train and remain tethered by a flimsy fuel hose while the train twists and turns. Later, you'll fly through storm clouds, narrow ravines, tight caves, even through waterfalls. And environmental hazards abound, from strong winds to massive falling rocks, and these elements add a sort of excitement that is generally missing from these types of games. As an added bonus, there are extra modes to enjoy, the most interesting being Sky Canvas, where you've got to fly through rings in order to draw shapes in the sky with smoke trailing from your plane.

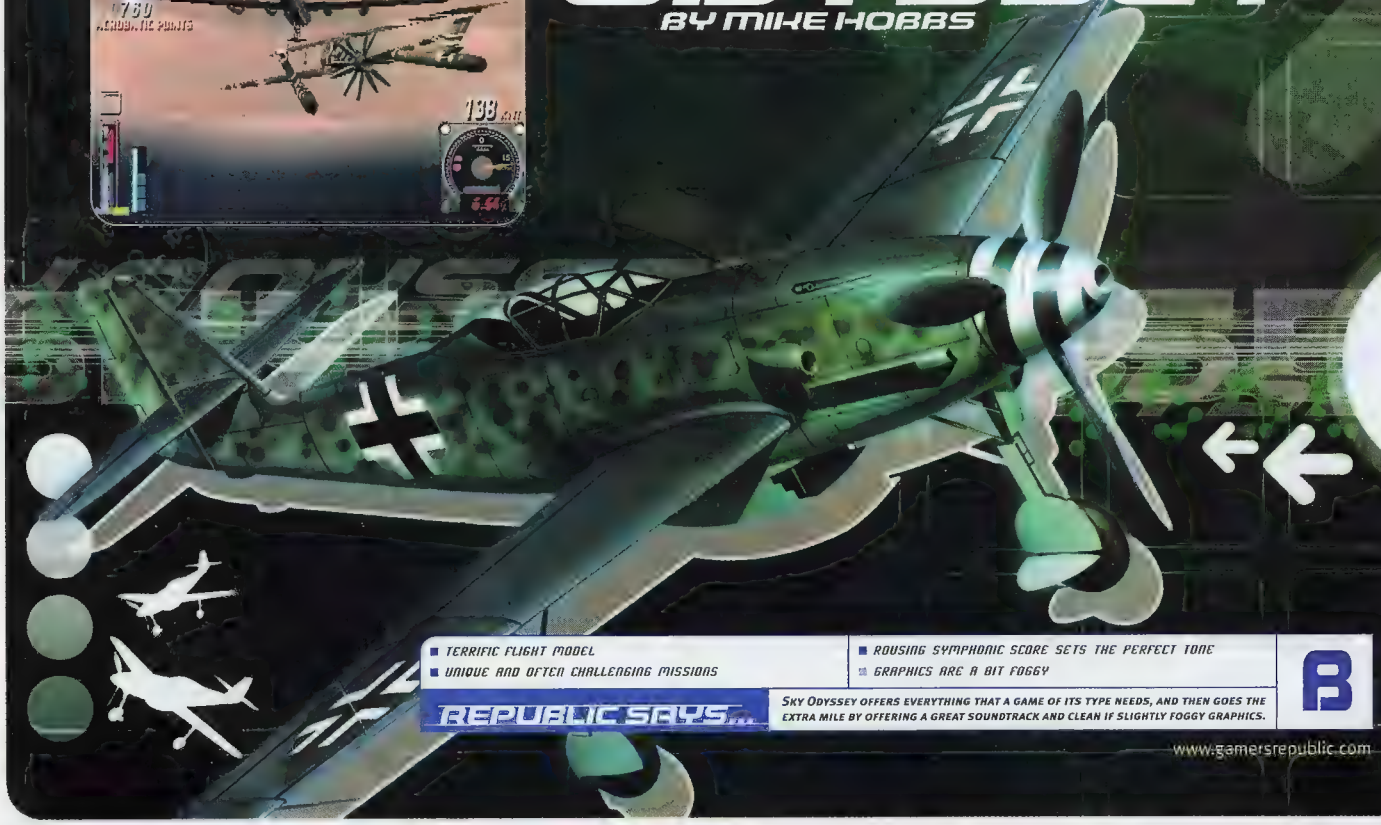
Like any game of its type, a first rate flight model is a must, and Sky Odyssey harbors a great one that captures very well the sensation of flying. You can almost feel the wind flowing over the air surfaces as you pitch and bank through the environments and enjoy the various planes' handling and aerobatic characteristics. And understanding the different aircraft is very important, as some are more well suited for certain missions than others.

Graphically, Sky Odyssey is nice with great-looking planes and often epic scenery. There is a fair amount of fog hanging about, but the view distance is good enough and there's always the visual seduction of a high frame rate to please the eyes.

This is a nice flying game for the PS2. It feels good, the missions are challenging and unique, and the overall presentation is first rate. GR

SKY ODYSSEY

BY MIKE HOBBS



- TERRIFIC FLIGHT MODEL
- UNIQUE AND OFTEN CHALLENGING MISSIONS
- ROUSING SYMPHONIC SCORE SETS THE PERFECT TONE
- GRAPHICS ARE A BIT FOGGY

REPUBLIC SAYS...

SKY ODYSSEY OFFERS EVERYTHING THAT A GAME OF ITS TYPE NEEDS, AND THEN GOES THE EXTRA MILE BY OFFERING A GREAT SOUNDTRACK AND CLEAN IF SLIGHTLY FOGGY GRAPHICS.

B

METROPOLIS STREET RACER

BY MIKE HOBBS

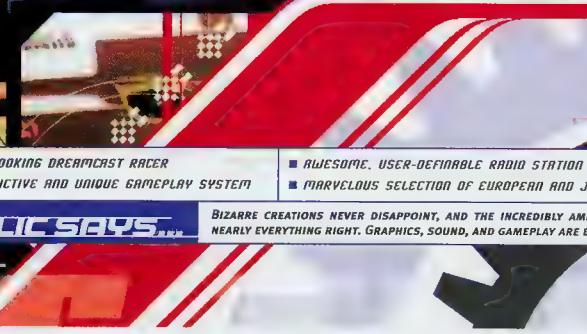
Forget the recycled Sega GT. This is the Dreamcast's best shot at capturing the Gran Turismo faithful. MSR is in a league of its own

It is my opinion that Metropolis Street Racer is the Dreamcast's real answer to Gran Turismo. Certainly, Sega GT is a solid game (atrocious American package design notwithstanding), but it's rehash city, a well executed knock-off. MSR, on the other hand, feels as fresh as the original Gran Turismo did on PlayStation. And it doesn't hurt that this also one of the best-looking driving games I've seen on any platform.

MSR's unique gameplay is built around a points system, wherein you earn Kudos based upon your performance through the game's many challenges. Each of the 25 chapters is divided up into a series of trials ranging from timed runs, fastest lap challenges, one-on-one races, and full championships. Within each, you are awarded points based on difficulty, time, and most significantly, style. By drifting and powersliding through corners, you are awarded huge style points, and mastering this is key to unlocking the wealth of chapters and licensed cars in the game. As it says in the intro, "It's not how fast you drive. It's how you drive fast." This strikes me as a very original dynamic for a driving game, and it's a great success because it's so addictive. Like Gran Turismo, you are always striving for that perfect lap, only in this case, not only are you battling for a time, but also for maximum points through driving style. The only thing that doesn't work for me is a very annoying penalty system, where points are subtracted nearly every time you bump into something, ruining some of the fun of close racing and apex-nipping.

But you will not hear me complain one whit about MSR's 30-fps graphics. This is the Shenmue of Dreamcast racers. Whether racing through Tokyo, San Francisco, or London, the visual density and overall ambience of the cities' scenery is astounding. And in a wonderfully inspired detail, the time of day changes in real time based on the Dreamcast's internal clock. Also surprising is the detail on the cars as you can make out fully lit interiors and well modeled exteriors.

Fantastically challenging and addictive and gorgeous to look at, Metropolis Street Racer is an ambitious driving game that also happens to be very original, something which can't be said about too many racers these days. Definetely worth a serious look by any driving fan. **GR**

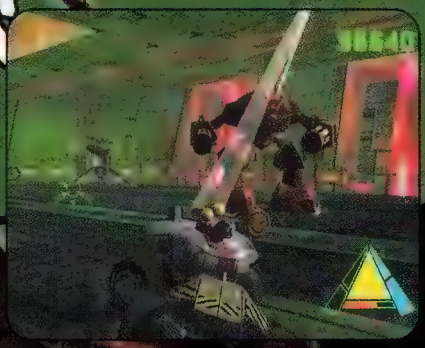


- EASILY THE BEST-LOOKING DREAMCAST RACER
- FANTASTICALLY ADDICTIVE AND UNIQUE GAMEPLAY SYSTEM
- AWESOME, USER-DEFINABLE RADIO STATION SOUNDTRACK
- MARVELOUS SELECTION OF EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE CARS

REPUBLIC SAYS... BIZARRE CREATIONS NEVER DISAPPOINT, AND THE INCREDIBLY AMBITIOUS MSR GETS NEARLY EVERYTHING RIGHT. GRAPHICS, SOUND, AND GAMEPLAY ARE BEYOND REPROACH.

A

www.gamersa...com

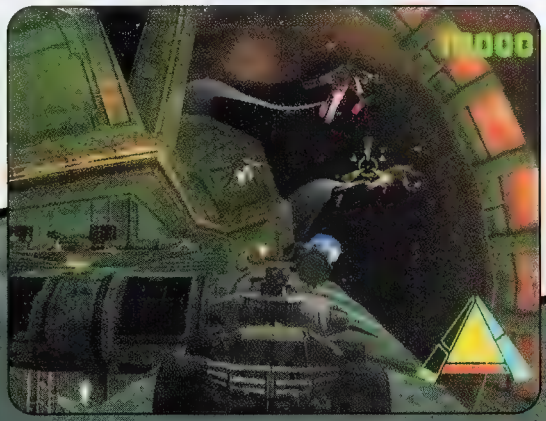


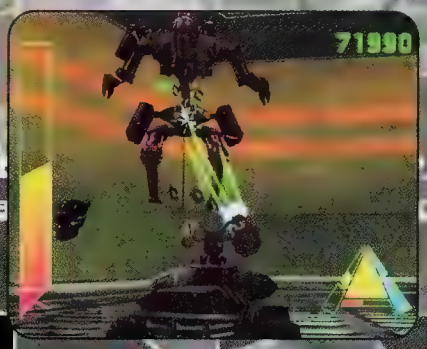
RED DOG

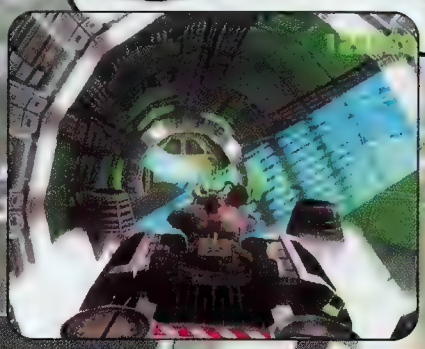
BY DAVE HALVERSON

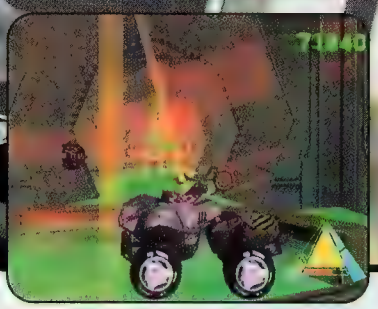
Exclusive content has become a rare and valuable commodity among today's consoles. The chances of a quality title appearing on a single platform these days is rare. When it happens, though, it can be a real coup for the recipient, who in this case, ironically, happens to be Crave. I say ironically because of the circumstances surrounding their last Dreamcast gem, Super Magnetic Neo. Neo should have been a mini-event among Dreamcast gamers, but our cry and Neo's spunky personality fell on deaf ears. I've gone over it a hundred times in my head and still can't figure out why Neo didn't catch on. Has the "old school" graduated? And if so, new players don't aspire to sharpen their skills? Undoubtedly, part of the problem with Neo was its difficulty, and as fate would have it, Red Dog follows suit. Crave's managed to unearth another sleeper, but like Neo, it's a gamers' game—no rookies allowed. This should count as a vote in the game's favor; after all, beating a hard game makes you a better player, right? But something tells me this dog may receive a beating from much of the mainstream press. It certainly doesn't help that there's no hype to speak of behind Red Dog either, yet here I am, regardless, urging you to seek it out.

Produced by Argonaut, makers of Star Fox, Croc, and the underrated Buck Bumble, Red Dog is to the Dreamcast what Blaster Master was to the NES—just shorter. Translation: it's one kick-ass assault vehicle rampage. To begin with, this is a Dreamcast thoroughbred, not a quicky PC port or a juiced PS game, and it looks it. The environments are not only vast, showing no sign of clipping, but they are impeccably









It started with Moon Patrol, followed by Blaster Master and Off World Interceptor.

The next big thing in meaty off-road assault rigs has arrived

well lit and constructed. The missions are equally well orchestrated, throwing you into a variety of circumstances that impart a genuine sense of participation. Red Dog's enemies are numerous, ominous, and attack with spectacular precision. From huge hovering armadas to menacing cyber spiders, Metroid-ish foot soldiers, and massive fire-spewing robots, each has its own special way of penetrating your defenses. Preempting their movements is a key element in the game, and so Argonaut has rigged the vehicle with insane sniping ability. You can nail targets from well over 100 yards out and, with the deflector shield, repel most attacks, sending them return mail with deadly force.

The real star of the show, however, has got to be the Red Dog itself, easily the jamminest assault rig ever devised. One heavily outfitted ATV, it has a center pivot for maximum maneuverability, meaty tires and pillowy suspension. You have not and will never feel so connected to a vehicle in a video game. This is one of those games where just driving around is fun. I also like the vector graphics-styled interface and the overall game presentation. Argonaut certainly knows how to polish a game. It's a shame Red Dog isn't a big first-party Sega game with tons of marketing support and promotions. I fear one of the year's best is going to fall by the wayside. But at least GR readers will know the scoop, and I suppose that's all that really matters. **GR**

- IMPRESSIVE LEVEL DESIGN AND STRUCTURE
- INTUITIVE ULTRA-FLUID CONTROLS AND GREAT PHYSICS
- EXCELLENT BALANCE - JUST HARD ENOUGH
- THE 1-PLAYER GAME'S A LITTLE SHORT BUT EXTRAS ABOUND

REPUBLIC SAYS... EXPERIENCED PLAYERS WILL SIMPLY LOVE THIS GAME. IT'S LOADED WITH STRATEGY TO GO WITH THE INCREDIBLE ENVIRONMENTS AND LOOKS ABSOLUTELY STUNNING.

B+

SHENMUE

BY BRADY FIECHTER

Traditional gamemaking takes a backseat in what is said to be the most expensive video game ever made

Shenmue is amazingly ambitious, full of fresh and new ideas that occasionally spring to life in wonderful ways. It feels like a labor of love, a game that was meticulously and passionately constructed. And it's also a game that is broadly flawed, breaking down under the weight of lofty goals that were inspired but ultimately ill-conceived and misdirected.

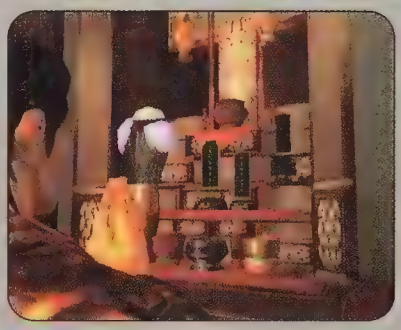
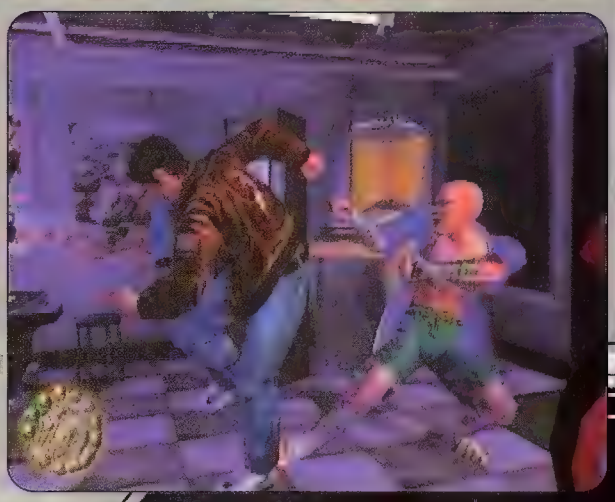
Some of you will give yourself completely to Shenmue's world, perhaps finding it to be one of the greatest gaming experiences ever. Some of you will balk at what director Yu Suzuki has envisioned as the next distinctive step in compelling game design, finding Shenmue meandering and dull. I fell somewhere in the middle.

Part of the game's intrigue is its uncommon reliance on realism, its insistence to present situations that are not unlike what we might be faced with in our day-to-day lives. If a bulb is out in the dark basement, go to the convenience store across town and buy a replacement; don't forget matches to light the candles. If you have compassion for a bum, buy him the cola of your choice, and if you want to help the girl who is nursing a stray kitten, take time to pick up a package of dried fish. There is a quiet, gentle mood to the game that can be quite absorbing, and there is rarely an intense urgency that strains the atmosphere.

Problems begin to surface when the casual pacing of Shenmue becomes protracted, draining your level of interest in the game's events. On several occasions, the locations of meetings with key figures are revealed through an extended sequence of languid conversations,

www.gamesrepublic.com

and then the contact with the person isn't made till the following day. Meanwhile, story development freezes, and there is not a single task to perform that has any impact on the outcome of the game. Killing time is fun at first—play Space Harrier and Hang On in the arcade, get to know the layout of the city better and admire its immense detail and realism. But so dispensable are these stretches in time that you'll find yourself, as I did, putting down the controller and letting the game sit idle as the clock ticks around to the next event.

It would seem that Yu Suzuki's intentions were to make the world of Shenmue a true virtual reality, a fantasy setting that adheres to many of the rules of our own everyday existence: the central character must return home to sleep, perform adequately at work, even stand around for a few minutes till the bus arrives. This unique design approach could be uniquely engaging, but here again Shenmue falters by forcing us to wander aimlessly far too often. In a game that strives to be an interactive movie more than anything else, I would argue that less interaction and more scripted events to fuel the story would actually have benefited Shenmue greatly.

The first hour of the game is compelling. In the opening sequence an 18-year-old boy named Ryo witnesses the death of his father, and he vows to find the killers at whatever cost, finding clues to the attackers' motives by conversing with people in the nearby towns. Initially it doesn't matter that the story is flat, told with clunky, unconvincing dialogue; the effect of the amazingly detailed city—one of the most visual striking spaces I've seen in a video game—is so strong that you are grateful to simply explore and soak in the surroundings. Not once does the visual hold loosen. It's almost enough to forgive the game of its shortcomings.

After that first hour, nothing much happens. Most of the townspeople have the same awkward, insipid responses to your questions, which rarely reach past casual inquisitions. By the time I had to drive a forklift for several days straight, moving boxes into warehouses, I yearned for good storytelling to resurrect my interest in the game; the only way Shenmue or any future attempt like it can reach great heights is by the power of bold narration, spoken with skilled voice actors.

For those gamers who feel that every game must have excitingly kinetic gameplay interaction to be effective, the successfully staged action sequences, both through real-time fights and Quick Time Events where buttons must be hit in conjunction with the icons that flash onscreen, are enough to steady this wobbly game. Yu Suzuki took chances, risking big failure, and for that he should be praised. He may have missed the mark, but at least he took a bold shot—which is a rare thing in this industry. GR

- THE LEVEL OF DETAIL IN THE CITY IS ASTONISHING
- THE CITY AFTER DARK IS MESMERIZING

- AWKWARD DIALOGUE AND STUNTED STORY DEVELOPMENT
- TOO MANY AIMLESS MOMENTS DERAIL THE IMMERSION

GR REPUBLIC SAYS... WHILE THE GAME IS BURIED IN CLUMSY AND LIMP STORY TELLING, THE VISUAL PRESENTATION SAVES IT. MARVEL AT THE OVERFLOWING WEALTH OF DETAILS TUCKED AWAY IN EVERY CORNER.

B-

JET GRIND

BY DAVE HALVERSON

If there's any justice in the world, then you're looking at the next big thing.

Jet Grind Radio is nothing less than a groundbreaking 3D experience

Jet Grind has been floating around the office for awhile: the Japanese import hit way back in July, followed by the previewable American game, which landed in my wanting hands in September. Normally I'd have played through the import day one, but in Jet Grind's case, the game was so exceptional that I opted to wait for the U.S. version so as to enjoy its every nuance, from the funky story to the brief but important level ops. For last month's American preview I played the game in pieces, level selecting and jumping around Tokyoto for screen-shot opportunities (hence the notion that Piranha was a new character when she is, in fact, not). Now that I've played all the way through the review version of the game, I am simply dumbfounded by its magnificence. The game that I have showered with praise in the past, due solely to its innovative design, visuals, and gameplay, I now discover has an engaging story, serious depth, is huge—spanning some 18 missions—has a phenomenal last boss encounter, and is packed with hidden venues and surprises out the wazoo. Jet Technique, Jet Graffiti, and Jet Crush levels—which become available as you make your way through Tokyoto and Jet Grind City—open the game up to almost infinite replayability. Looking for the proverbial fly in the ointment or blemish of any kind... nada, can't find one. Jet Grind, for what it is, is a perfect game. It truly breaks new ground—one of the few games these days to do so—and sets a high standard in the process. When they send in the clones (and they will) I wish them luck; they have a lot to aspire to.

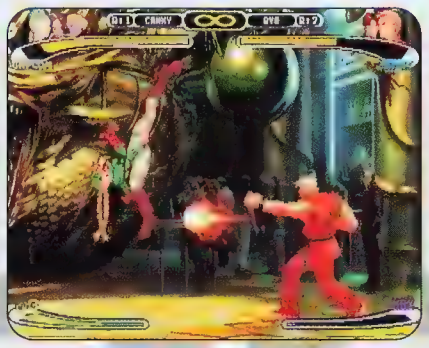
The gist of the gameplay in Jet Grind is technical yet simplistic. Huge cities and urban centers lay before you with red arrows depicting areas to tag. You're job is to not only get there and spray like a pro, but to do so while avoiding the cops and within the required (and very generous) time allotments. In between, rivals challenge you to contests, mimicking moves or racing, and if you win, they join your posse, the GGs. You don't need to master any complex control schemes, but you do need to master the basic elements—namely grinding and hitting transitions. As you get better and better, what looked impossible at first glance becomes do-able, and the feeling you get each time you master an area is truly momentous. Once you become one with the game's flow, you may find yourself so imbedded in the action that you'll actually get an attitude and start talking trash back at the rival gangs as you tag their backs and faces and paint over their graffiti. And character design—you want character design? If ever in the history of video games action figures were an absolute must, now is the time. The Love Shockers-Poison Jam-Overdrive magnetic motor-skating shoes... forget about it, these are the new millennium's action heroes. The same praise goes for the music. If I don't see a Jet Grind soundtrack, I'll be shocked.

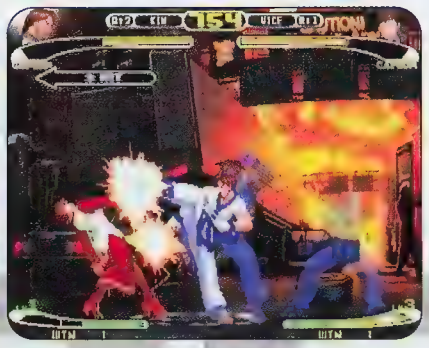
The long and short of it? This is what makes Sega so, well, Sega. They're just a great video-game company. Always have been. True, they missed a beat between 16- and 32-bit, but they are back with a vengeance. I urge you: give Beat, Mew, Slate, Gum, Piranha, Garam, Yo-Yo, Tab, Cube, and Combo a grind and tell me that this game isn't all that and a bag of potato chips. **GR**

- THE VISUAL STYLE IS THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME-I HOPE
- JET GRIND GOES BEYOND GREAT LOOKS—IT'S VERY LONG
- AND PACKED WITH EXTRAS TO KEEP YOU PLAYING
- CHARACTER DESIGNS AND MUSIC SIMPLY AMAZING

REPUBLIC SAYS... I PRAY THAT JET GRIND FINDS ITS AUDIENCE—I WANT SEQUELS, ACTION FIGURES, SOUNDTRACKS, AND LUNCH BOXES.

A

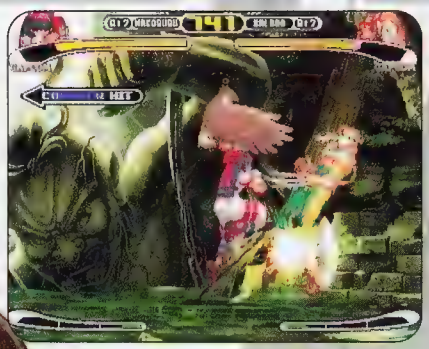




CAPCOM VS. SNK

BY CHRIS HOFFMAN

Ryu vs. Terry. Ken vs. Kyo. Mai vs. Chun-Li. Raiden vs. Zangief. M.Bison vs. Rugal. The greatest fighters ever collide

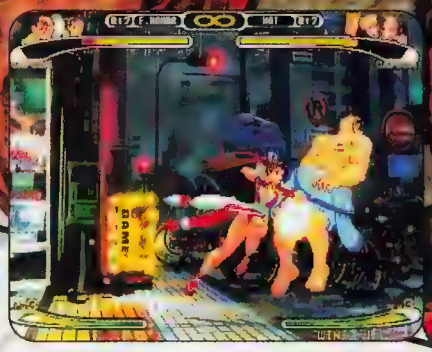


This is it. This is the game that fighting enthusiasts have been waiting for. From collision to control to graphics to sound, Capcom vs. SNK is the nearly flawless fighting experience that we hoped it would be, bringing the casts of two of the greatest fighting series of all time together for one epic battle.

Capcom vs. SNK's fighting system is beautifully honed perfection, as though King of Fighters and Street Fighter Alpha 2 joined in holy matrimony and this game was the result. Using a ratio system, players select teams of one to four characters (depending on their strength) and the fights play out elimination style, like KOF. Keeping the fighting pure, there are no tags or partner assists, no air blocks or alpha counters. There's beauty in simplicity. Playing a bout of Guile vs. Blanka took me back a decade and I felt the same exhilaration I did when I first threw a fireball in Street Fighter II.

There are enhancements, though. Super combos have been retained, a guard crush has been added, and the overall collision and feel are reminiscent of SFA2. The controls have been reduced to four buttons so it plays great on the DC pad, and players can also select from Capcom or SNK "grooves" of play (build up your super meter by attacking in Capcom, or charge your supers and have desperations in SNK) depending on your style.

Speaking of style, this game exudes it in every way. The SNK influence in the backgrounds is clear, as each level has a unique, almost artistic opening to set the scene, be it the thinning of a blizzard or a reflection in a rainstorm's puddle. My favorite is when a battle in front of a car wreck is introduced by a vehicular collision from an 8-bit arcade game.



The backgrounds themselves are incredibly rich. One features the razor-sharp artistry of a golden dragon statue with nearly photo-realistic people moving about; another has the gratuitous detail of wood beams collapsing that Capcom could have easily left out but didn't. Characters are also fantastic. Having the all-star casts of Street Fighter and KOF is good enough, but having the majority of them redrawn is exceptional. The fluid sway of Mai's...outfit tails is plain awe-inspiring. Many fighters have all-new moves or animations, but many of the SNK characters don't have every attack for balance's sake. However, each fighter has a hidden EX version of him/herself, so you can get Terry with his Rising Tackle or Terry with his Power Dunk.

Capcom vs. SNK even has a great soundtrack (complete with hidden tunes from classic games), awesome character voices and tons of secrets to unlock. And, bless their hearts, Capcom has even retained support for the late, lamented Neo Geo Pocket Color. The only reason I'm not giving this game an A is because I know Capcom was holding back. Where's tag mode? Survival mode? Personalized endings? What about Andy Bogard, Joe Higashi, Guy, Dan or Robert? Ah, well. That's what sequels are for. **GR**

- ALL-STAR CAST OF CHARACTERS FROM SF AND KOF
- ACTION-PACKED YET TECHNICAL FIGHTING PERFECTION
- SOME OF THE BEST BACKGROUNDS EVER
- GREAT SOUND AND FLAWLESS CONTROL

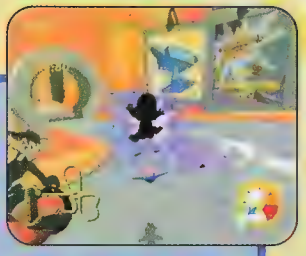
REPUBLIC SAYS... THE GREATEST FIGHTERS EVER COME TOGETHER IN A GREAT GAME. A FIGHTING FAN'S DREAM COME TRUE.

A-

LOONEY TUNES SPACE RACE

BY DAVE HALVERSON

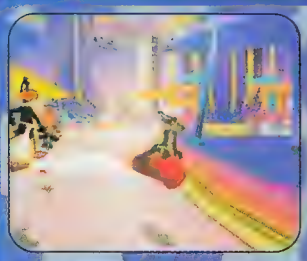
The stank air hanging around the kart-racing genre finally begins to dissipate as Infogrames serves up yet another formidable DC racer

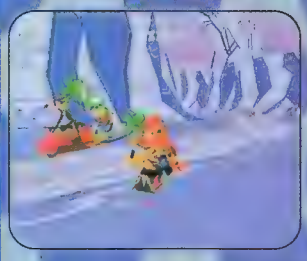


If you're in the market for a thrilling next-generation kart racer—and who isn't?—the infamous armadillo has a Dreamcast original that's good to go: Looney Tunes Space Race. Featuring top stars from the rich and prestigious WB universe like Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Wile E. Coyote, Sylvester, Yosemite Sam and Elmer Fudd, Space Race is presented in a cool retro WB semblance and uses the ever-popular cell-shaded polygon process for visuals that bring Chuck Jones' rich 2D visuals to convincing 3D life. Of the game's many venues, including Time Trial, Challenge, Multi-player, and Acme Events, the main attraction is of course the big one-player game, where you traverse the vast WB galaxy in a no-holds-barred kart brawl.

One of the things I really like about Space Race is that it makes no bones about being as much about the Acme weapons and gadgets you pick up as it is about the racing, although there is a method to the madness. The tracks are generously strewn with equal amounts of ingenious cartoon weaponry and cans of turbo juice, so the trick is to use your weapon efficiently while keeping an ear out for the sound of incoming attacks so that you can use your turbo to jet out of harm's way. Master both of these techniques while driving like a champion and you'll too be on your way to the winner's podium; fail, and get used to pianos and elephants landing on your head. And that's the other thing I like about Space Race—the characters act like toons; they're nuts and can't be killed and they know it! The control is up to the challenge, with the analog stick controlling not only side-to-side motion but a perpendicular Jet Moto-like pivot, and to keep you on your toes rivals constantly challenge you to one-on-one duels for additional Acme Tokens, which open special venues and more tracks.

With killer graphics, great gameplay, and an unbeatable universe featuring color commentary by none other than, I say, none other than Foghorn Leghorn, Space Race is definitely in line for Dreamcast kart racer of the year. GR





- AS MUCH ABOUT THE WEAPONS AS THE RACING...
- ...AND NOT AFRAID TO SAY SO
- SLICK WB FRONT END AND RUNNING THEME
- WHERE'S TAZ?! I HOPE HE'S HIDDEN.

REPUBLIC SAYS... THE DREAMCAST REALLY SHINES WHEN DEVELOPERS WHIP OUT THE CELL-SHADING TECHNIQUE. INFOGRAMES IS HAVING A SURPRISINGLY GOOD RUN.

B+

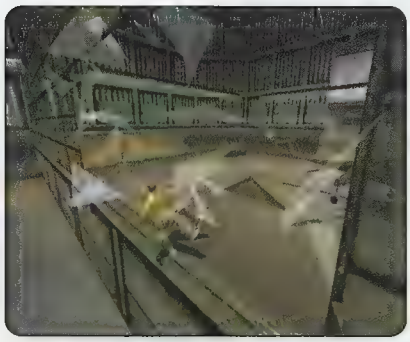
TONY HAWK PRO SKATER 2

BY TOM STRATTON

Say goodbye to your loved ones and find a comfortable playing position. The best game of all time has a chance to prove itself on the DC

A brief overview for those unfamiliar with the PlayStation version of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 (which I don't believe are very many): there are eight new levels based on true skating locations, including Skate Street in Ventura, California and the notorious Bullring, used in Birdhouse's "The End" video. The ramp used in Tony's sequence has him performing the world's first and only loop the loop. The game also has a nice selection of secret characters and two secret levels, all waiting to be unlocked.

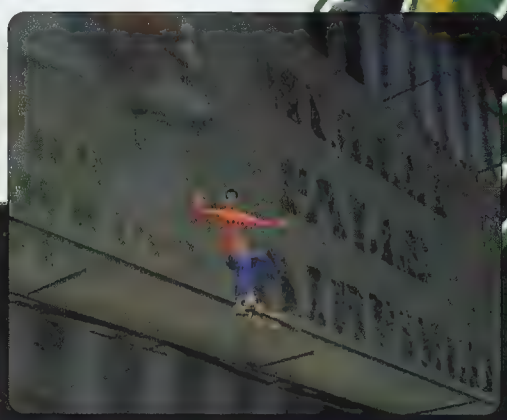
As far as DC improvements go, it is spread nicely between visuals and audio. Ramps, bowls and the skaters in general have all been upgraded with extra polys and ultra-rich textures. Any surface with a slight curve or bend has a smooth look and feel to it. And the environments are littered with high-res glory on every surface. Waxed curbs, worn ledges and broken-in plywood/masonite ramps look exactly like they do at the local skateparks. Another subtle detail is the swinging shadows cast by the skaters as they skate and destroy the different levels.



The sound is remarkably better too. Not in the music quality, but the sound effects used when olliing, sliding, grinding, launching, and of course, landing—even when riding a sidewalk. And every surface has its own very distinct sound—very hypnotic, especially if you skate. Grind tricks all sound different, depending not only on which grind you perform, but the surface you're sharpening.

The only gripe I have with this version is the way grind moves feel compared to the PS version. Here, on the DC, everything is moving at a solid 30 frames, all the time. So, when locking into a grind, you don't get a true sense of resistance while rubbing metal against metal, wood or concrete. Instead, you just sort of glide along while a great sound clip runs, building the illusion of something genuine. Now, it may just be because the PS runs at a slower frame rate, but when I do a grind trick, it feels like I am really chippin' away at that particular surface in the PS game.

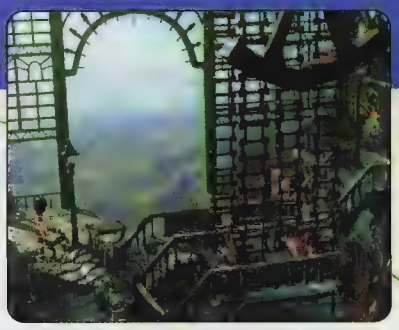
This, of course, is a minute difference, but it does effect the overall feeling. If you have never played the PS version or ever stood on a skateboard while grinding a curb or rail, you probably won't realize the absence of friction, but trust me, it makes a *big* difference. Other than this, THPS2 on the DC is bad-ass. **GR**



- EXCELLENT TEXTURES, FRAME RATE, AND SOUNDS
- TONS OF SECRETS TO UNLOCK
- SKATE AS RODNEY MULLEN
- DID I MENTION YOU COULD SKATE AS RODNEY MULLEN?

REPUBLIC SAYS... I WANTED TO GIVE THIS AN A+ IN THE WORST WAY, BUT LACK OF FRICTION WHILE GRINDING IS JUST ENOUGH TO PREVENT IT. STILL, A MUST HAVE FOR DC OWNERS.

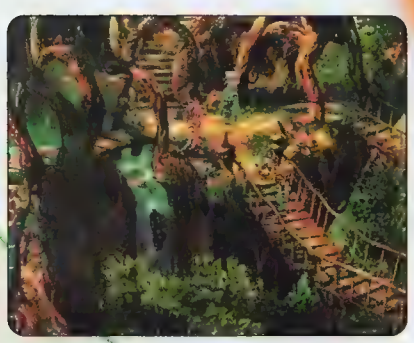
A

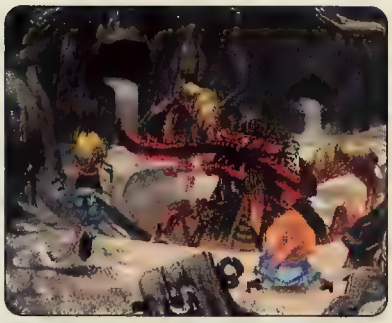


FINAL FANTASY IX

BY BRADY FIECHTER

Returning to the magic of ancient technology and fantastical settings, Square creates a masterpiece—possibly the best FF yet



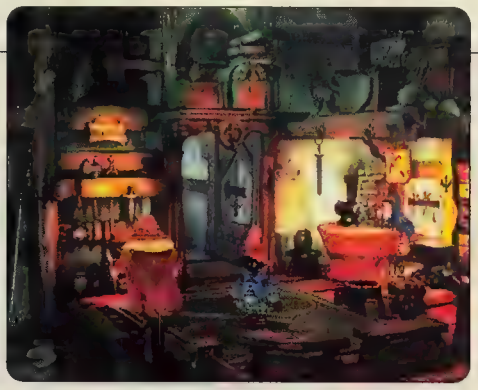


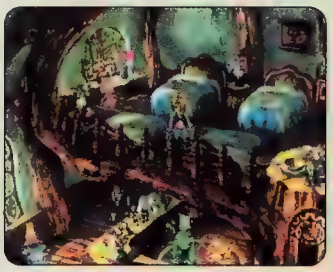
Square's Final Fantasy IX contains so many riches that it towers over most games before it. It is a game of magnificent craft, of uncompromising technical achievements, but its true glory is in its ability to deeply stir our emotions, to evoke a rare poignancy through a beauty and artistry of story telling and wondrous visions.

Departing from the spare, impersonal scores of the past two Final Fantasy games, master composer Nobuo Uematsu immediately sets the tone at the title screen with an original work, the first of many beautiful compositions to follow, and there is already that ineffable magic that strikes us before the game even begins. Surrendering to the game's spell is effortless as the first compelling image rolls off the screen—a cloaked figure struggling to survive the elements as a small boat gets violently tossed by the stormy sea. After the stunning CG introduction concludes, the hero of the game is introduced, lighting a candle in the bowels of a dark ship. His name is Zidane, a young thief who runs with a band of criminals infamous for their efficient skills. Traveling to the cheerful, elegant city of Alexandria to abduct its princess, Zidane and his friends quickly land themselves in a heap of trouble, frantically fleeing the city in a grand theater ship as a shower of cannon fire emanates from the queen's massive arsenal. The ship is crippled, crashing into an inhospitable woods outside of Alexandria.

By this time, we've marveled at exciting and extraordinary CG sequences, come to love the classic active-time battle system, delighted in vivid, gorgeous images of a magnificently drawn city, and been introduced to charming characters. Pushing us to emotional involvement gradually and subtly, the simple but effective story takes a while to build momentum, and the big surprises rescue the lighter, more banal moments. The charm and gentle themes of friendship and love and their profound importance on the purpose of life expand into familiar but warm territory, expressed with an innocence and deceptive strength: a few tremendously powerful moments reveal just how involved we've really become.

One of the game's strengths is its ability to endear us to the characters. After stumbling away from the crash scene, the amiable princess Garnet and her irascible body guard, Steiner, become the first permanent fixtures of the party. Attempting to return to Alexandria, it is discovered that a war has begun, and the princess is somehow deeply connected to the conflict. More characters join the cause, but the dedicated number never grows to more than eight, maintaining a more intimate following during the adventure. Wonderfully designed and broadly expressive, the characters become an inextricable part of our plight. Several times during the game, critical events demand that we utilize the strengths of the entire party, which gives the game a balance and emotional investment with the characters that is rare in an RPG; multiple party members can be rewarding—fine examples being Suikoden and Chrono Cross—but the emotional con-

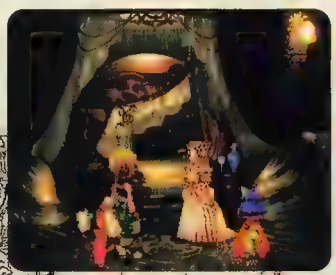


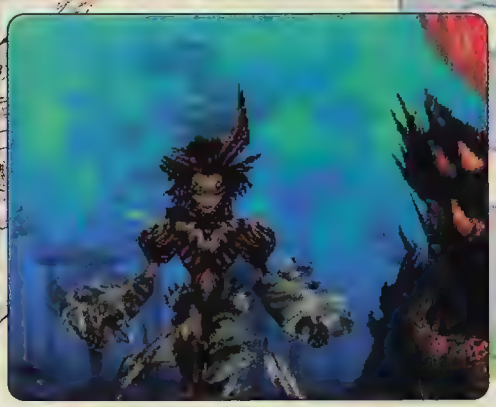


nection can often be spread too thin.

The action in Final Fantasy IX recalls the brilliantly engaging battle scenes in the classic Final Fantasy VI, straightforward and presented with unobtrusive flair. It's incredibly satisfying to level up, defeat giant bosses, earn new strengths. And good riddance to the tedious reliance on summon spells, now known as eidolons: only a few are learned late in the game, and their use is limited and have much greater impact in their infrequency.

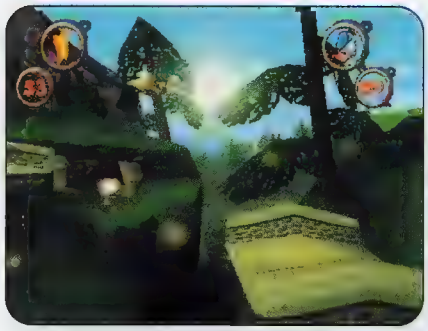
As the ninth game in what is one of the most accomplished and longest running video-game series, you'd think the magical Final Fantasy formula would have lost some of its potency by now. Yet this is the finest since VI, maybe the best yet, powered by the force of its visionary imagery. The creative minds who have dreamed up this world have leaped past the boundaries of their art, crafting sights we aren't used to seeing in a video game—sights so captivating and inspired, so beautiful and full of wonder, that they are worth experiencing if for little else. But the glory of Final Fantasy IX is that it does not fail as a complete experience. It sticks with us, thrills us, entertains us, moves us, dazzles us, captures our hearts and imaginations. To play it is to inhabit a place of pure fantasy. **GR**





- A VISUAL MASTERPIECE
- CLASSIC BATTLE SYSTEM—BRILLIANTLY SIMPLISTIC
- BEAUTIFUL MUSIC, CHARACTER DESIGNS, EXCELLENT STORY
- WHAT AN ENDING!

REPUBLICSAYS... FINAL FANTASY IX IS TESTAMENT TO THE POWER AND ARTISTRY INSPIRED GAMEMAKING CAN POSSESS.



DONALD DUCK GOIN' QUACKERS

BY DAVE HALVERSON

Ubi Soft rolls out the red carpet for one of Disney's most beloved characters as Donald Duck takes up residence in the house that Rayman built

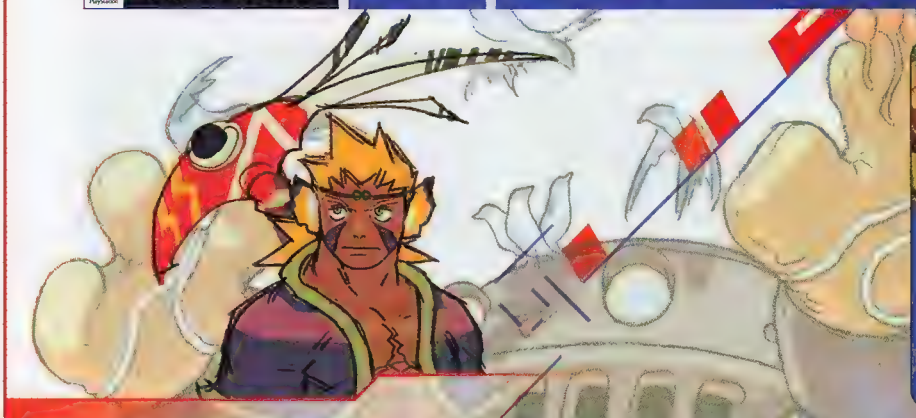
If Crash Bandicoot were a duck, this would be his game. Patterned after Crash in every way using the fantastic Ubi platforming engine, Goin' Quackers is every Crash fan's dream come true—that is, if you don't mind a little déjà vu. Each world consists of four levels—two side-scrolling, two 3D; a chase level where you run away from something very large coming towards the screen; and a boss encounter where you must discover the method of attack before commencing to pummel. Of course, Ubi Soft has added their own special touches to the formula, like collecting toys within each level to open the chase stage, and each world presents a series of challenges straight from the minds that brought us the whimsical (and underrated) Tonic Trouble.

Essentially, Goin' Quackers has all the makings of a memorable platforming romp. The brunt of the game is spent jumping and carefully studying timing routines among moving objects—good old-fashioned twitch gameplay for the masses. The control is tight with a beautiful double jump that makes the gameplay fluid and intuitive. The art direction is top notch as well: flowing rivers, waterfalls, fiery pits, ghostly manors, and bustling cities all come to life with convincing detail. Anyone who remembers the haunted house level in Quackshot will instantly respect GQ. Graphically, the game is gorgeous, living up to the visual prowess of the N64 and then some. Although it comes late in the game, this is one of the best-looking N64 games you will ever see. The PS version enjoys CG cinemas over the 64's real-time, but otherwise you really can't compare the two; the 64 game is far superior. Between the PS2 and DC, the jury is still out. Look for a review on those bad-boys in January. GR

- A SOLID PLATFORMER IN THE TRADITION OF CRASH
- SOME OF THE BEST VISUALS THIS YEAR FOR THE 64
- GREAT BALANCE - MEMORABLE BOSSES
- TOO EASY AND TOO SHORT

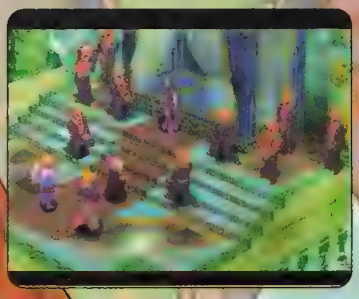
REPUBLIC SAYS... RIDING ON THE AMAZING N64 TONIC TROUBLE ENGINE, DONALD DUCK MAKES HIS BEST GAME SHOWING SINCE QUACKSHOT.

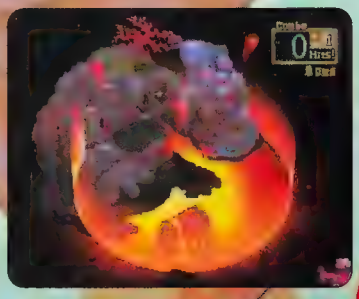
B



BREATH OF FIRE IV

BY CHRIS HOFFMAN





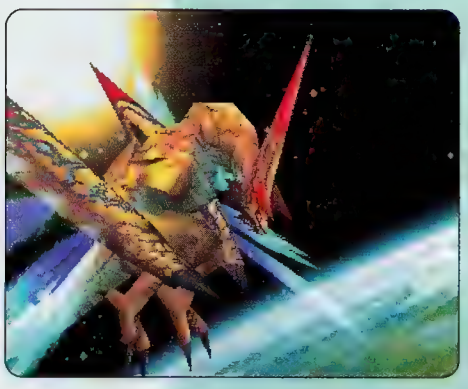
The god-like power of the dragon can create a great future or cause the end of the world. Feel the breath of fire

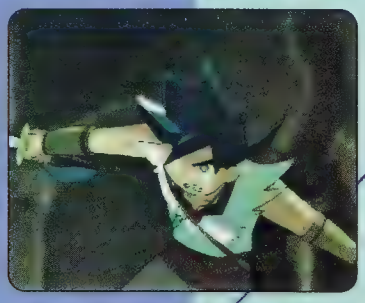
Capcom's Breath of Fire series has never been the biggest name in RPGs. It's never had CG graphics or movie-quality FMV cutscenes or the cinematic presentation that has become so popular in RPGs in recent years. But when it comes to personality and gameplay, BOF is in the upper echelon of its genre, and Breath of Fire IV may be the best game the series has seen.

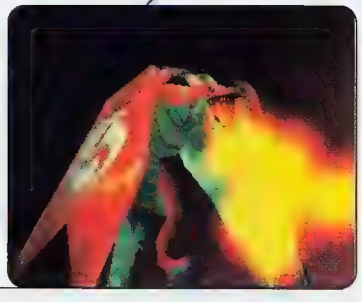
At the heart of BOFIV's appeal are its characters and its story. Like previous installments, BOFIV stars a mysterious dragon-boy named Ryu. Ryu immediately finds himself helping Nina, a winged princess, and her cat-man friend Cray as they search for Nina's sister Elina. Amidst the backdrop of a tenuous peace between the Empire and Alliance nations, Ryu and his companions become entangled in a treacherous web of political maneuvering where Ryu's latent dragon abilities are the coveted prize. To add even more intrigue, players occasionally get to control Fou-Lu, a dragon-man with immense power who is said to be Ryu's other half.

Visually speaking, each character is superbly designed (though not necessarily original, as most are very similar to those in previous BOF games), and personality-wise, each character has his or her own intriguing, unique aspects, from Nina's innocence to the robot Ershin's humorous quirkiness. Fou-Lu's personality alone is incredible and could serve as a model of how character development should be done in video games. Subtleties in the characters and their interaction create an underlying drama that makes the adventure emotionally involving yet not contrived.

BOFIV also excels with its graphics and animation. Like the last installment, BOFIV features a polygonal world with hand-drawn characters. Thanks to Capcom's majestic use of soft pastel colors and a keen attention to detail, the rotatable backgrounds go beyond the blocky limita-







tions of 3D and almost look hand drawn. The sprite characters are beyond anything previously attempted in an RPG. Capcom has continuously pointed out that each character has more than 3,000 frames of animation, but it's not just hype—it's care that really pays off. How many other RPGs do you know of where you rest, then have the main character get up, stretch, yawn and wipe his nose? The numerous attack and damage animations in battle are also extremely nice.

This same attention to detail permeates the entire game—not just in the visuals but in the gameplay as well. Everywhere you go there's something new to encounter. There is an almost infinite variety of enemies, and characters can use more than 200 spells and skill attacks. By guarding in battle you can learn new skills from your foes, and characters can even chain skills together. Master characters teach new moves for even more depth, and every character has a unique move they can use outside of combat, such as smashing boxes or hovering to view your surrounding area. Additionally, Ryu also gains the ability to transform into various dragon forms (amidst a brief but very cool anime FMV clip), plus he can summon super-powerful dragon attacks a la Final Fantasy. Throw in a great battle system and tons of mini-games, including navigating a river and a shockingly fun fishing game (compatible with fishing controllers), and you have an RPG with unparalleled variety.

Any flaws? Not many. Character movement is just a bit awkward, thanks to the isometric perspective, making it tough to line up with obstacles correctly, but that's about it. Overall, BOFIV is an excellent RPG experience. It still doesn't match up to Final Fantasy, but Breath of Fire IV will be a great adventure to play through once you've conquered FF9. **GR**

- SOME OF THE BEST RPG ANIMATION EVER
- GREAT CHARACTERIZATION AND STORY
- TONS OF SPELLS AND DRAGON POWERS
- IT'S STILL NO FINAL FANTASY KILLER

REPUBLICSAYS... WITH GREAT CHARACTERS, GOOD GRAPHICS AND DEEP GAMEPLAY, BOFIV IS A GAME RPG PLAYERS WILL LIKE AND BOF FANS WILL LOVE.

B+

WWF NO MERCY

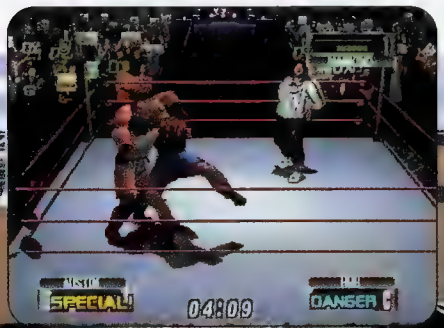
BY THE HEARTBREAK CHRIS

Oh, hell yeah! The WWF returns to N64 to compete for the title of best wrestling game ever! It's true! It's true!

How do you top one of the best wrestling games of all time? That's the question THQ was facing with WWF No Mercy, the sequel to Wrestlemania 2000. Is it possible to top the incredible character roster, the diversity of options, the electrifying animation, the sheer style and presentation that was so good before? Well, maybe not, but No Mercy puts on a great match in the process.

WWF No Mercy is the same quality stuff that we've come to expect from Aki. Lots of modes, lots of moves, lots of characters, and the same intuitive control that we've been using since WCW World Tour came out years ago. All the necessary additions have been made to the roster (including Benoit, Malenko, Tazz, Rikishi, the Dudleys, Angle and more), and almost all the favorites have returned such as Austin, the Rock, and even Shawn Michaels and Ken Shamrock. New modes have also been added. The guest referee match is hilarious in multiplayer, and the ladder matches are very cool (yes, you can senton off the top!) Handicap matches and a survival mode have been thrown in too. New championship modes (encompassing every belt in the WWF) are far superior to last year's career mode, and they even have backstage storylines, better than anything attempted before, where you can make various choices as you climb the ladder to the top. Plus, the custom character mode has been enhanced, backstage brawling has been added, and some characters have nifty expanded victory celebrations.

Unfortunately, many other aspects aren't as good as WM2K. The character models are a slight step down, the facial textures aren't as good, and the game just looks less vibrant than before. Ring entrances aren't as extensive either, and some new animations are stiff. The game also suffers quite a bit of annoying slowdown when four characters get in on the action. Other flaws from last year haven't been fixed, like the way characters' arms aren't attached to their bodies. There's still a lack in audio quality and quantity, and the game suffers from that missed-move syndrome where you knock a guy down then attempt a ground move but do a standing attack instead. Still, WWF No Mercy is a very solid, fun game that wrestling fans should definitely pick up. Just don't expect it to take the title from the super-polished Wrestlemania 2000. GR



- EXPANDED ROSTER: BENOIT, RIKISHI, ANGLE AND MORE
- LADDER MATCHES AND GUEST REFEREEING
- FANTASTIC CHAMPIONSHIP MODES
- SLOWDOWN AND DECREASED GRAPHIC QUALITY

REPUBLIC SAYS... NOT BETTER THAN WM2000, BUT STILL VERY FUN. A MAIN EVENTER IF NOT A WORLD TITLE HOLDER.

B+

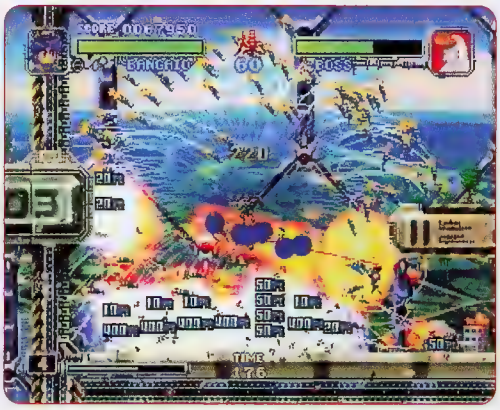
BANGAI-O

review by m. hobbs • dev: treasure • pub: conspiracy ent. • avail: now

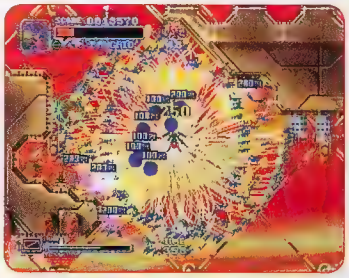
A

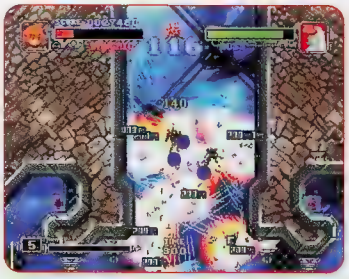
Originally set to reach these shores courtesy of ElectroBrain, Treasure's Dreamcast version of Bangai-O is now coming to us from newcomers Conspiracy Entertainment. But whoever the publisher, be thankful that one of Treasure's most entertaining and addictive shooters is officially making it over.

First appearing on Japanese N64s in limited numbers, the Dreamcast Bangai-O is a more enjoyable game in every way, looking far better graphically and benefiting from a simple yet profound change in the power-up system. Some explaining may be in order here, as Bangai-O's immensely unique gameplay requires it. Feeling more like a platformer than any other shooter in memory, you maneuver your Bangai-O robot through often massive levels, which stretch both horizontally and vertically. Switching on the fly between two different Bangai-O pilots, you have access to either homing missiles or reflective lasers as you strive to annihilate everything onscreen. But where the game earns its exalted place in the pantheon of shooters is in its massively addictive super attack system. By squeezing the R-trigger on the Dreamcast, your Bangai-O robot unleashes a radial bloom shot that increases in density in direct relation to the the number of bullets and enemies arrayed around you. In other words, the more things there are onscreen, the more intense your super shot. And it is awe-inspiring to watch as an incredible explosion of shots radiates outward from your little Bangai-O robot, clearing everything in its path, and you quickly begin to crave this destructive gameplay device to an almost unhealthy degree. And the Dreamcast version only heightens your ability to satisfy this urge. In the N64 game, you filled up the meter necessary to unleash a super attack by collecting the myriad fruit left behind by fallen enemies and buildings. But here, simply destroying things fills up this meter, so the more you destroy, the more you can destroy, and, as I keep pointing out, this is horribly addictive.



The game's stellar play is made even sweeter by the typically twisted Treasure sensibility, which has you fighting often impotent bosses and enjoying curious character exchanges extolling, among other things, the virtues of 2D gaming. What a fantastic game this is. GR





TEST DRIVE LE MANS

review by m. hobbs • dev:/pub: infogrames • avail: now

A-

The Dreamcast has been getting some gorgeous racers lately. It all started with Yu Suzuki's 60-fps Ferrari F355, then Bizarre Creation gave us the incredibly detailed Metropolis Street Racer, and now, Infogrames delivers a true beauty with their latest in the Test Drive series, Test Drive: Le Mans.

In addition to recreating the prestigious 24 hours of Le Mans (complete with a ridiculous real time mode), TDLM offers up races on many of the world's best racing circuits, including Suzuka and Donington park, and all are rendered with great attention to detail and rich color. The same goes for the cars, both GT and Prototype, and there are wonderful effects everywhere, like a moving shadow that follows the position of the sun.

Without question, TDLM looks fantastic, but it is the four-player split-screen that is perhaps the most impressive. With an incredibly good frame rate and surprisingly intact draw distance, the game truly can be enjoyed by two or more players. And in a fantastic touch, a three player game gets a race leader view in the fourth unused quadrant. The Test Drive name is recovering. GR

REAL POOL

review by m. puccini • dev: takara • pub: infogrames • avail: now

PS2 B

What a highly entertaining, challenging and addictive pool simulation game this is! I enjoy playing real pool and have always wanted a console pool game worthy of my time and the technology has finally arrived whereby the physics and accuracy of the game can be realized.

You can choose to play five different types of Carom or eight different types of Pocket or try your skill on 25 different Puzzle mode tables. You can also go into a tournament against the CPU and you'll automatically play different types of Pocket games. The CPU anime characters give the game some added appeal. The music is a snazzy selection of tunes and the sound effects are dead on. The physics are perfect and the control mechanisms are all nicely done and it takes but a half-hour to really get all the controls down in order to get each precise angle. GR

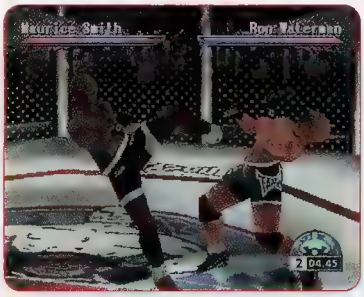
0 31441 07950

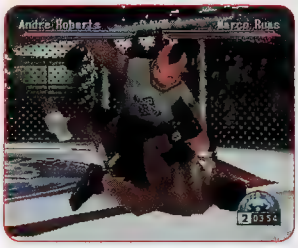
UFC

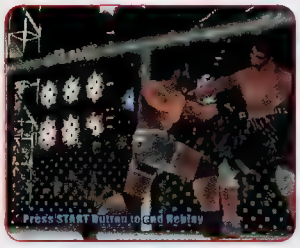
review by **c. hoffman** • *dev:* **opus** • *pub:* **crave** • *avail:* **now**

PlayStation **C+**

If you start playing UFC for PlayStation and expect a game that's anything like the DC version, you'll be disappointed. The game handles like a whale and neither the visuals nor the presentation come close to the title's 128-bit cousin (although the models look quite nice for PS, despite clipping problems). But if you look past the sluggish play and underwhelming visuals long enough to spend some time with UFC, you'll discover that the realistic and sim-like gameplay can be both intuitive and rewarding. The simplified counter system generally keeps the playing field level, and while matches usually degenerate into button-mashing reversal-fests where you just keep hoping your opponent makes that one slip-up, the bouts can become strategic and incredibly intense. UFC also has tons of moves, a full lineup of real fighters and even the real ref and ring announcer. If they had added a bit more excitement overall and loosened up the controls, UFC would have been a winner. **GR**







INCREDIBLE CRISIS

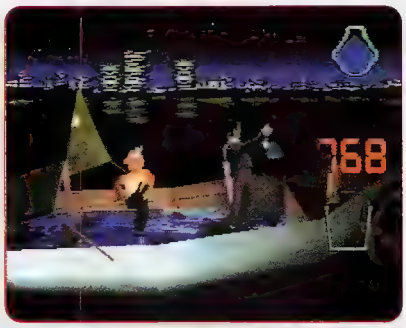
review by **m. hobbs** • *dev:* **polygon magic** • *pub:* **titus** • *avail:* **now**

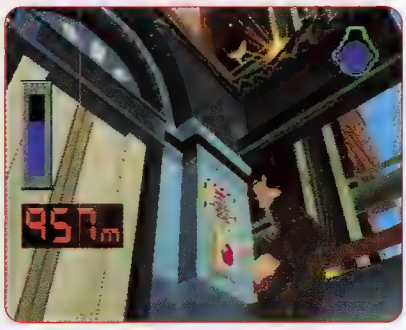
PlayStation **B**

This is an odd one, a game so Japanese in its whimsy and absurdity, it's an absolute wonder that Americans have access to it in English form. But here it is, and in Incredible Crisis you will find one of the most unique and funny little action games ever to grace the PlayStation.

In this twisted title, you follow the trials of your average Japanese family as they face all manner of humorous and entertaining mini-games. Linked together by a story that is equal parts sadism and hilarity, the family will endure terrorists, alien attack, clandestine back rubs, ambulance ride quizzing, and falling elevators, among many other mini-games. Most involve fast button pressing and astute timing, but some require just a modicum of brain power. The only constant between them is their absurdity and general level of fun.

Looking for an entertaining game off the beaten path? Incredible Crisis is for you. **GR**





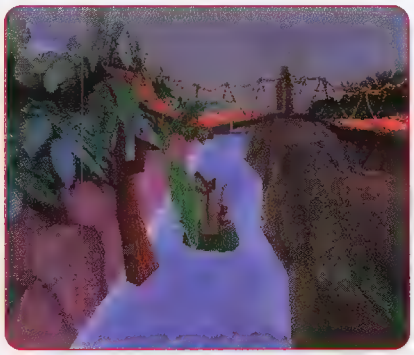
EMPEROR'S NEW GROOVE

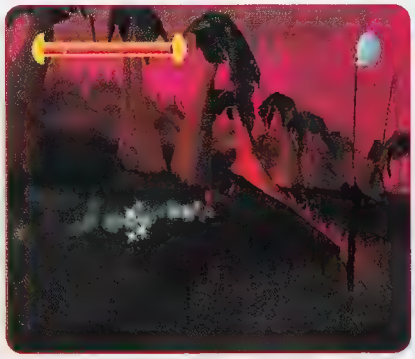
review by **d. halverson** • *dev:* **argonaut** *pub:* **sony** • *avail:* **now**

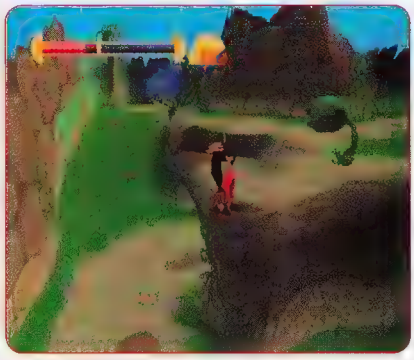
PlayStation **B**

Argonaut, who remain one of the industry's top developers regardless of their workload (I really don't know how they do it), has crafted one of the best Disney games to come along in a very long time. Based on the upcoming John Goodman and David Spade vehicle, Disney's *The Emperor's New Groove* finds Spade, a high-falutin' king reduced to a smelly llama, running for his life from Yzma, his freshly terminated advisor who would like to see him six feet and four hooves under.

Riding on a PS engine that nearly out-Spyros Spyro, the game exhibits a wealth of clever play mechanics highlighted by a turtle race, a beautiful river segment, a fantastic old-school chase theme, and llama-tastic maneuvers like spitting and stealth. Argonaut's well-thought-out combination of play mechanics brings about a sense of freshness to the PS platforming stable, even this late in the game. Hinging on ultra-clever level design containing just the right mixture of platforming and puzzle solving, the whole package comes together with the help of cutscenes right out of the movie, a soundtrack that exudes vintage Disney, and the truly witty repartee between the game's many inhabitants. This game actually made me laugh, and that never happens. Goodman's voice talents are obvious, as are Ertha Kitt's and, while Spade's mimicked, the actor's got the comedian's dialogue pretty much down to the tee. Kuzco (Spade) taunts the bosses and the player and it's funny—really—and the pace is excellent, adding up to a truly enjoyable overall package. Here's a game you'll definitely want to try out on your new PS2 or, if you're one of the trillions still waiting, here's a great way to keep the old PS humming in the meantime. **GR**







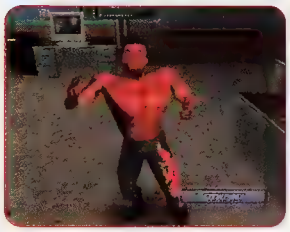
オールフォーマット リビュー
Lic No. AA7681841-00
published monthly by MILLENNIUM PUBLICATIONS INC.

WCW BS ASSAULT

review by: the heartbreak chris • dev: kodiak interactive • pub: ea • avail: now

PlayStation **F**

Is this even legal? I don't mean beating your opponent with dozens of objects, I mean making a game as bad as WCW Backstage Assault? I guess EA decided that the best part of last year's Mayhem was the backstage brawling, so they concentrated on doing more of that instead of fixing the game's numerous flaws. The character models are so atrocious that coworkers came running in to see what was making me laugh so hard. The wrestlers are poorly constructed and disproportional, and the animation and textures are just as bad. Control is stiff and you'll constantly do the wrong thing at the wrong time (like grabbing a weapon when you want to lock up with your opponent), although it's admittedly better than Mayhem. Few characters are initially selectable, and there's an incredible lack of modes. It's about as fun as beating yourself with a steel chair. Any good points? Well, the commentary is good, and the fact that you can beat David Flair 80 different ways from Sunday is amusing, and...that's it. How EA ever let a title this horrid out the doors is a mystery. Well, as Booker T might say, "Don't hate the publisher, hate the game!" GR



WOODY WOODPECKER

review by b. fiechter • dev: universal • pub: konami • avail: now

PlayStation **D+**

I may be alone here, but I want to see more kart racing-combat games. Part of the reason this genre gets dogged so often is understandable: nobody ever seems to get it right outside of the select few bursts of inspirations at Nintendo and Naughty Dog.

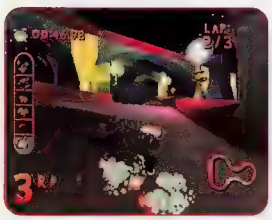
Here we have, yet again, a derivative and dull kart game. I can take derivative, but apparently it's even difficult to follow the Mario Kart template. In Woodpecker Racing's case, poorly designed tracks and some of the most innocuous weapons I've seen in the genre conspire to cripple the game. But other than poor execution of bland ideas, the designers have attempted to add a few new tricks to the mix, such as various types of vehicles that offer no variation in play and globe-spanning locations that have no distinctive characteristics. And then there's the attacks that can be made with club-like items from inside the car, which is ruthlessly annoying. Go buy a used SNES and the eight-year-old Mario Kart instead. GR

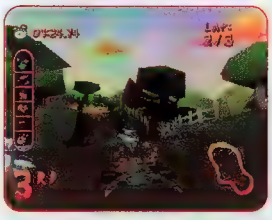
LOONEY TUNES RACING

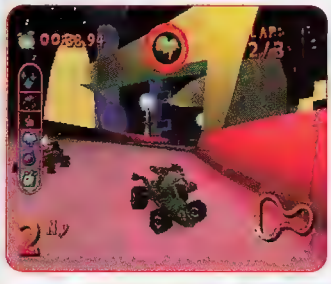
review by b. fiechter • dev/pub: infogrames • avail: now

PlayStation **C+**

The very best kart racing games are those that have bright personality and tons of charm. It's no wonder old cartoon characters tend to always pop up in these games. I love the idea of taking Bugs Bunny, Taz, Marvin the Martian and other Warner Bros. staples into the arena of racing and combat in Looney Tunes Racing; too bad the execution isn't quite there. Of course, the competition is meant to be lighthearted, with weapons ranging from the falling anvil and storm cloud to boxing gloves and cream pies, but more intensity and energy is needed. It doesn't help that the game moves sluggishly, masking the finer points of the gameplay, and while there are quite a few extra bonus items to open, there's no reward in your success. A big offense in the game is simple course layout, but the biggest offense of all is letting the invaluable Warner Bros. license go to waste. GR





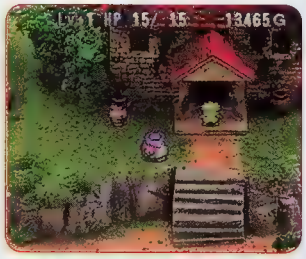


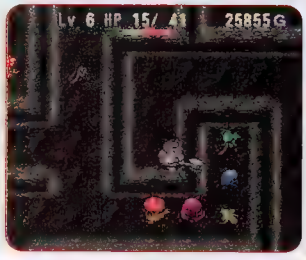
TORNEKO

review by c. hoffman • dev: chun soft • pub: enix • avail: now

PlayStation **C+**

For a random-dungeon pseudo-RPG, World of Dragon Warrior: Torneko, The Last Hope does its thing well. Unfortunately, by their very nature, these combat- and exploration-heavy games tend to be filled with a lot of tedium and not a wealth of gameplay, and Torneko is no different. With a story more of an afterthought, players spend their time in Torneko battling through dungeon after dungeon, all of them randomly generated (read: dull) with random enemies and items to match. Every time you enter a dungeon you need to build up your character from level one, and for the most part you need to collect your items all over again since you can bring so few in with you. As every battle-worn adventurer knows, combat and leveling up are the most boring part of an RPG, thus making Torneko a potential snooze-inducer. Once you near the end of the game you get access to all kinds of cool things like melding weapons and starting a dungeon already leveled up, but it comes way too late to balance out its tiresome gameplay. On the plus side, the claymation graphics and Akira Toriyama character designs are charming, plus there are tons of items to find. The combat can also get extremely strategic at times. If you like these random-dungeon type of games, then by all means pick up Torneko. But if you crave a bit more depth in your adventuring, you'd best wait until the next true Dragon Warrior arrives. GR





0 31441 07950

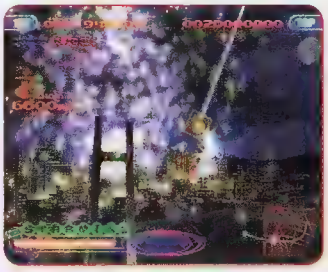
PS2 PlayStation Dreamcast NINTENDO 64

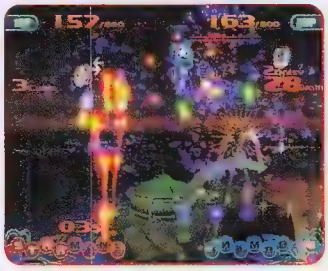
FANTAVISION

review by m. hobbs • dev/pub: sony • avail: now

PS2 B

Truly original and truly beautiful, Sony's Fantavision has been a favorite of mine since the Japanese release earlier this year. Its combination of simple, addictive puzzle gameplay and incredible backgrounds and firework effects proved impossible to resist, as did the surreal, live-action cinemas between every other level. But I bemoaned the game's brevity and lack of two-player mode, though I'm very happy to report that the U.S. version at least corrects the second complaint. Fantavision is still too short, but the addition of a two-player competitive mode increases the replayability greatly.





For those unfamiliar, the premise of Fantavision is simple: as unexploded fireworks stream upward (or from all directions in the gorgeous space levels), you link matching colors by shooting this little cursor at them. Match three or more colors, and you can detonate the series, exploding matching shells as they fly into the blast. There are wild shells, which allow you to create new sets of chains, as well as bonus shells and stars, which, when collected in great enough numbers, allow you to enter the Starmine bonus mode, where scores of like-colored shells blast forth.

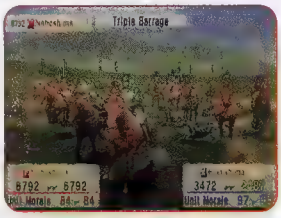
Fantavision would have made a perfect pack-in game for the PS2. It shows off some of the system's inherent graphic power, and it's short enough to leave you wanting so much more. **GR**

KESSEN

review by m. hobbs • dev: koei • pub: ea • avail: now

PS2 B+

Electronic Arts did more than they needed to in localizing Kessen, Koei's amazing-looking historical war simulator. Enlisting nearly 30 voice actors and re-rendering the cutscenes to reflect the English voice, EA's efforts in translating this game are impressive. But I have to say, a subtitle job would have been more appropriate, and obviously more economical. This isn't exactly a mainstream title we're talking about here, and those that may be interested in such a strategy title are almost definitely not averse to reading a bit of text. Plus, I am of the mindset that no dub ever sounds as convincing as the original Japanese, and my opinion has not been changed.



These issues aside, Kessen is probably one of the most engaging strategy games I've encountered. Of course, everyone talks of the impressive real-time battle scenes, but it's in the overall presentation that Kessen reaches another level. Through the use of a very dramatic symphonic score (performed by the Moscow International Symphonic Orchestra) and well-scripted cut scenes detailing troop movement and personal intrigue, the game has an incredible sense of occasion about it.

And thanks to Koei's fairly user-friendly design, the game is as simple or as complex as you like, though there is still a slightly lengthy learning curve. **GR**

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

review by m. hobbs • dev: omega force pub: koei • avail: now

PS2 B

By the time I had finished the first level of Dynasty Warriors 2, 1,025 enemy warriors had been vanquished by me. Curiously, however, I was not yet tired of the game. Over 1,000 times I slashed and hacked poor enemies to death, and I was still hungry for more. Two factors are at work here. One is the astounding sight of seeing literally dozens of fairly well detailed characters running around fighting on screen. Sure, some characters pop in and the backgrounds are dull, but there is something unquestionably new about what is being presented onscreen. The second factor is the skill of developers Omega Force, who also developed the overlooked original one-on-one fighter and Destrega. There is just an inherent satisfaction in the way the game plays and controls, making your first combo nearly as enjoyable as your 1,oooth.

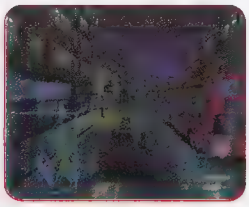
But without question, Dynasty Warriors 2 is incredibly one-note in nature and you are basically repeating the same thing over and over again. But I argue that this is no different than a good shooter in terms of its repetitiveness. Action fans will like this. **GR**

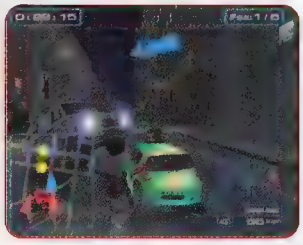
MIDNIGHT CLUB

review by d. halverson • dev: angel studios pub: rockstar • avail: now

PS2 B+

Angel Studios double timed it to get Smuggler's Run and Midnight Club Street Racing out at launch, and I think we all owe them a round of applause. While they get some sleep, the city streets are bustling with activity and the trash talkin' homies are just waiting for you to join in the fun so they can give you grief, trash your car, and see just how bad you want to join up. Although you can choose Career, Chase the Flag, go Head-to-Head, race Arcade, or Just Cruise, it's Waypoint where the crazy action awaits. Hang onto your pink slip, because what begin as simplistic straight-ahead races quickly become an adrenaline-pumping mad dash for the finish through bustling city streets—and the cops are right on your ass. While the textures and frame rate (although MC runs at 30+ fps effortlessly) aren't up to snuff with Smuggler's, and there does exist slight and subtle draw-in way the heck back there, you have to give props for the amount of stuff onscreen. Traffic lights, trash cans, newsstands, pedestrians, and all manner of city garb are all modeled and have full collision. Add to that wicked rain and weather effects, insane car models (and check the little drivers!) and it's safe to say that MC is a stalwart launch title. GR



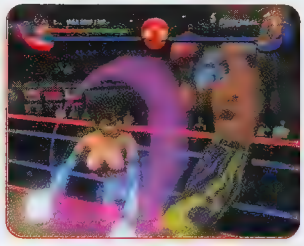


READY 2 RUMBLE 2

review by d. halverson • dev/pub: midway • avail: now

PS2 B

The much-improved Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 offers PS2 newbies (lucky!) a shot at a polished and much deeper version of last year's smash hit boxing game. Beginning with the all-important CG introductions, Midway has blended a real-time FMV Michael Buffer with the game's polygonal characters to kick off this year's addition in style. From there you'll enjoy a similar but much deeper and well-thought-out Championship venue. Training has been refined to include a bevy of new events like a rhythm-based aerobics class and a cool home video front end, with a calendar system putting you in charge of every facet of your boxer's regimen. Best of all, though, this year's version controls a heck of lot better than last with greater precision, an improved combo system, new specials, and above all, the two knockdown rule is in effect! Aside from the many in-game refinements, there is a far greater and diverse assortment of combatants to choose from, and the models are pretty much seamless glory. Michael Jackson's shoulder sockets have a peculiar ratchet effect, and clothing still has a tendency to melt into the surfaces, but overall these bad boys and girls (especially the girls) are superbly crafted. The crowds and arenas still appear a little on the lifeless side, but given the game's breadth and superb career mode I hardly find them a problem. R2RR2 is not a sim and therefore still plays much like an arcade game but there is ample depth in the game should you be patient enough to find it. On the flip side if you just feel like beating the crap out of someone the arcade game is still a twitch gamer's dream come true. GR



SUMMONER

review by c. hoffman • dev: volition • pub: thq • avail: now

PS2 D+

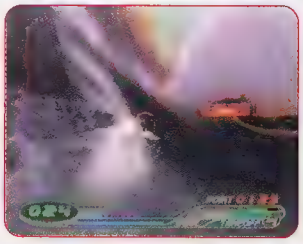
If I were a summoner, the first thing I would have summoned is more programmers to fix this game. Despite good intentions, Summoner is a travesty to the RPG world; how the designers could build a game so poorly conceived is simply astounding. The GR staff was literally laughing out loud when we saw enormous buildings draw in mere feet in front of the character, and that continued as we saw the zombie-like character faces and 32-bit-quality models. The battle system is worse - your characters fight automatically (and often like morons), without menus or real-time interaction. Although you have control over spells, chain attacks and other aspects, the "look ma, no hands" approach is more enjoyable, which is little praise for the worst battle system I've ever seen. A confusing quest and atrocious frame rate only make things even more unbearable. I'll give THQ credit for a vast, intriguing world and some top-notch voice acting, but it's obvious that the game system never should have made it past conceptual stages. This is one of the few games I've played to inspire suicidal thoughts, and that alone should be testament to Summoner's lack of quality. GR

SURFING H30

review by d. halverson • dev: ascii • pub: rockstar • avail: now

PS2 B-

I have mixed feelings about Surfing H30. Perhaps if I hadn't played the game in it's original form... Originally released in Japan as Surfroids, the game was based on a fictitious surfing tournament here on Earth between a galaxy of aliens sometime after the planet was overcome by great floods. This explained why the sets appeared so far from shore and the overall otherworldly look of the game. In order to neuter Surfing H30 and turn it into a rad-gnarly-sick American-like game, the front end has been chopped off - a beautiful sequence of CG intros - the music, once full on Dick Dale surf tunes has been reduced to a generic blend of plain wrap extreme sports alt-rock, the loading screen has, like, old OP flowers on it (eeeww) and the main characters are righteous token surf boys and girls that aren't modeled quite as good as the aliens were. Thankfully some of the original aliens are hidden in the game. Still, even sans alien influence and full of age-old surf lingo I still find this game altogether extremely playable and highly addicting. The gameplay mechanics run deep and if you can keep the lil' thumb board (such an awesome pack-in) from popping off you can attain rad air. Shite! I said rad! It's the best surfing game probably ever and features some H2o that'll make you cry. GR



0 31441 07950

SPIDER-MAN

review by c. hoffman • dev: edge of reality • pub: activision • avail: now

B

Just like its PlayStation counterpart, Spider-Man on N64 is an excellent game. The comic looks and super-powered action have come together in an amazing action-fest that never gets old as Spidey swings through the city, explores buildings, chases after famous villains (like Scorpion and Carnage) and much more in what I consider one of the best action games to hit any system in the last few years. Unfortunately, the N64 version hasn't been improved over the PS game. Models, textures, draw distance, and music were all damn good on PS, but it would have been nice to get something enhanced for this version. They also removed the FMV and replaced it with stills taken from the PS version. Cutscenes using the in-game engine would have been nice, because the humor and drama of the game just don't come through with the stills. Reading Venom's "surf the web" line just ain't the same as hearing it. The controls are also extremely funky and the config option doesn't help. Still, N64 owners have a great game to play. If you don't have a PlayStation, then certainly get this. GR

JEDI POWER BATTLES

review by c. hoffman • dev/pub: lucas arts • avail: now

C+

Of all the Star Wars Episode 1 action games, this one is the best. Far better than the crappy PlayStation version and the hideous Phantom Menace adventure on PS/PC, Jedi Power Battles is a decent action-platform title that isn't great but is still entertaining for a while, much like the movie. Pick your favorite Jedi—Obi-Wan, Qui-Gon, Mace Windu and others—and fight through the movie locales (totally redrawn for DC), smashing apart tons and tons of Trade Federation droids, jawas and other baddies along the way. The music is great and the pure fighting is fun (you can even use vehicles), and the platforming elements are only marred by the fact that it's sometimes difficult to judge distances. Unfortunately, the action is repetitive, the game is filled with graphic glitches, and the two-player mode is frustrating instead of fun. GR

RC DE GO!

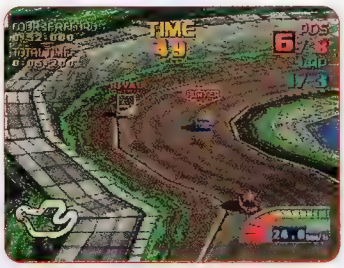
review by m. hobbs • dev: taito • pub: acclaim • avail: now

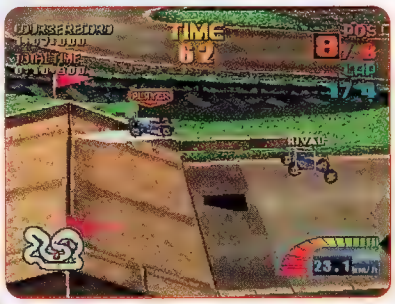
PlayStation B-

The first of Taito's popular "de Go" series to reach the States, RC de Go! could be viewed as a modern-day RC Pro-Am, one with a nod towards Gran Turismo, which should make it very popular indeed.

Developed with the cooperation of top RC model maker Kyosho, RC de Go! attempts to re-create the fun of racing both on- and off-road RC cars. Through quick race, championship, and practice modes, you'll learn how to control the fast little cars using the dual analog sticks like an RC controller. But where the game becomes slightly Gran Turismo-like is in the massive number of upgrades that you can purchase with your race winnings, everything from pinion gears and stabilizer sets to new bodies and coil over dampers.

Like other games in the de Go! series, RC's graphics are slightly rough looking, though I have to admit that it is becoming increasingly difficult to look at PS games in the age of the Dreamcast and PS2. Even so, I enjoyed this game, especially as I used to be an RC car freak. It does capture the appeal of racing little cars around short tracks, and it's a helluva lot cheaper than obsessing over a real RC car. GR





SAMBA DE AMIGO

review by m. hobbs • dev: sonic team • pub: sega • avail: now

A-

What is the point of a video game? If the answer is to provide a fun audio-visual experience built around hand-eye coordination, then Sonic Team's Samba de Amigo fits this brief to a tee. Addictive and infectious as hell, this game makes it easy to see why the Japanese have been lapping up music/rhythm games for the last few years.

Samba de Amigo may be a slightly pricey proposition with the maracas peripheral costing a rather steep $80 for one set, but the fun is unquestionable. The concept of the game is simple: shake the maracas in time with a series of blue and red spheres as they cross into at least one of six circles at three different heights. Perfectly in time with the familiar Latin riffs, the maraca hits soon become instinctive and incredibly addictive. And at various junctures, you will be required to pose with the maracas at certain positions, generally garnering huge laughs from anyone who happens to be watching.

In addition to basic music game, Samba de Amigo also offers extra play modes, one of which includes a series of mini-games using the maracas, and it's very fun, especially with two players. Of course, having two sets of maracas and one copy of the game represents an almost $200 investment. Sure, you can play Samba with a regular DC pad, and it's still enjoyable this way, but it was obviously meant to be played with maracas.

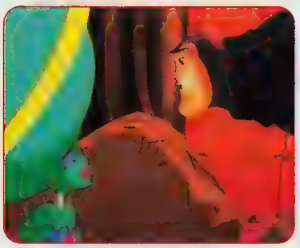
GR

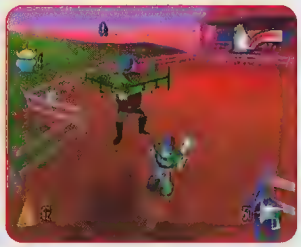
BUZZ LIGHTYEAR

review by d. halverson • dev: traveller's tale • pub: activision • avail: now

D+

It's hard to fathom how Buzz Lightyear of Star Command, one of the most lackluster Dreamcast offerings this year, went so wrong. It's based on a monster license, produced by an incredibly respectable developer, and distributed by the stalwart Activision, yet, it's flawed in a number of ways. The level design, gameplay, and structure are all misfires, the models are shamelessly simplistic PS ports, and the game's balance is all out of whack. The goals—mad dashes to the end of the levels amidst constant fire that can't possibly kill you—are just weird. What probably seemed like a good concept that Traveller's Tale could bust out in a jiffy obviously went awry. In the game's favor, it runs at a smooth 60-fps, is easy to pick up and play for young kids, and has a generous amount of cinemas based on the new cell-animated Buzz Lightyear episodes. That ain't sayin' much though. I'm being generous. GR



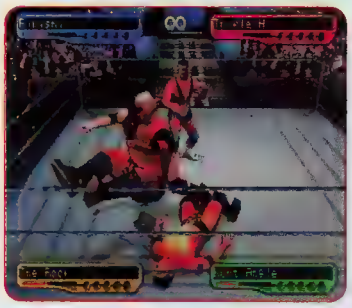


WWF SMACKDOWN! 2

review by the heartbreak chris • dev: yuke's • pub: thq • avail: now

B

Ladies and gentlemen, we have a new winner for best wrestling game on PlayStation. In many ways, WWF SmackDown! 2 is unmatched. I've never seen so many options and modes in a game before. Just about every match you can imagine is here—singles, tag, triple threat, battle royale, cage, casket, I Quit, the awesome Hell in a Cell and more. Even the hardcore invitational time limit title match is here! The custom character editor is now the best in the business, and you have the ability to modify every aspect of your character, from head shape to sock color. Over 60 superstars are selectable, and you can even pick from over a dozen rings! Character models are extremely well-done for PlayStation, with realistic faces and detailed textures, and characters' expressions even change (like X-Pac sticking out his tongue!). Not everything is perfect, though, especially in Season mode. You get treated to pointless cutscenes that pertain to nothing, have run-ins that never lead to feuds, and you're forced to plod through abbreviated versions of every match on every card, whether you're competing or not. In addition, the game engine still just isn't as solid or intuitive as the one in No Mercy, and THQ still hasn't bothered to put in commentary. Even with flaws, SmackDown! 2 lays the smack down on every other PS wrestling game out there. GR



QUAKE 3

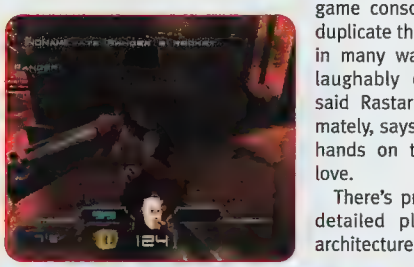
review by s. akinnuso • dev: rastar productions pub: sega • avail: now

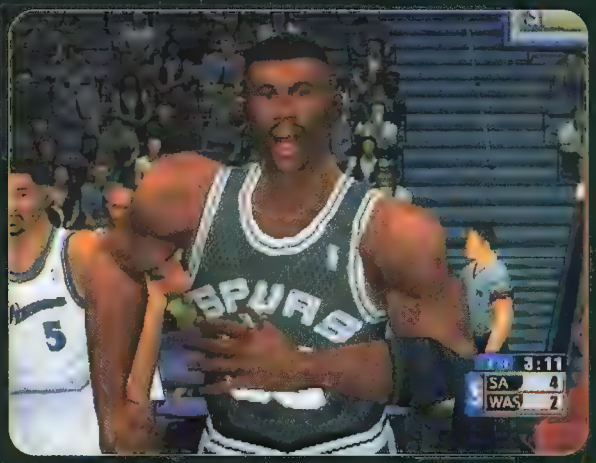
A-

Quake III: Arena is an achievement, no two ways about it. When Sega announced some months ago that they would faithfully re-create the expensive, polygon-intensive, PC multiplayer arena game, they had their fair share of doubters. When the company promised a faithful conversion of a game that required an additional $200 graphics card on a $1,000 computer, their $149 video-game console (hoping not only to duplicate the Quake experience, but in many ways surpass it) seemed laughably overwhelmed. Not so, said Rastar Productions, and ultimately, says you, once you get your hands on their stunning labor of love.

There's precious little lost in the detailed player models or level architecture, as every dungeon and skin from the PC beauty is translated without loss through the Dreamcast hardware. Each of the 10-plus weapons sport an array of impressive particle effects that showcase the power of the system, and additional effects like lightning outside windows and moving backgrounds actually improve on its PC predecessor.

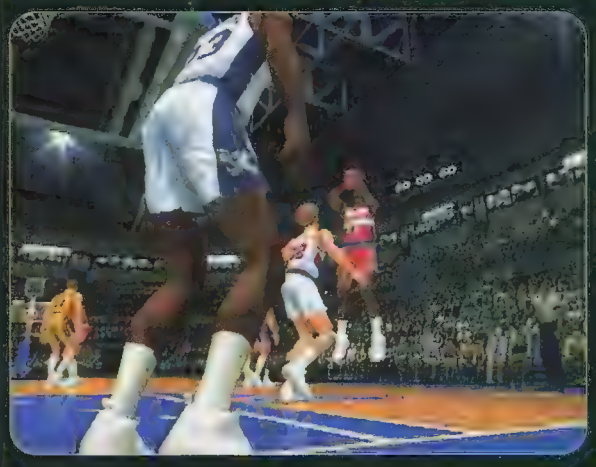
With all of the levels from the PC-based Quake III: Arena, including choice add-on levels and Dreamcast-specific maps, the game moves at a constant 30 fps, never slowing down, not even on your 56k SegaNet connection. Offering the ability to play against both Dreamcast-based Quakers (either online, or against four home-based players) and PC-based vets logged into the Quake server, Quake III: Arena meets every promise Sega made, all without online lag time or the slowdown and frame-rate drop that has plagued other PC conversions on supposedly superior systems. Quake III: Arena kicks ass and takes names, and is possibly the best multiplayer, arena-style experience you're likely to get on a console. With the only fault being an emphasis on multiplayer gaming, Sega and Rastar Productions worked overtime for my high praise. Take a bow. GR





Georgetown alumni Allen Iverson makes it back as Sega's frontman two years running in NBA2K1. And while from the outside things may look the same, Visual Concepts has topped the charts once again with a ridiculous amount of improvements to the game nestled inside that shiny CD. Liable to make any video basketball fan go bananas, there are just as many new additions as there are sequel improvements.

Like NFL2K1, the game offers more than double the play mechanics in both offense and defense. The flexibility in the post and backcourt is second to none and makes it hard to believe we accepted anything less last year. Not only can you back down a defensive man, but now you can choose to go right, left and even fade away from the opposition to sink the little man inside the boat. Same goes for the open court as well. The way the game handles the offensive moves, like spins and crossovers, seems to have even more valuable qualities. Forget about how much better these moves look, just for a moment; they now seem to have a visibly effective property to them. While I am not entirely sure, crossovers seem to help ball carriers get out of trouble. And if a spin is executed at the perfect moment, any contact made will bump a defender just enough for you to gain better positioning.



In fact, there is so much happening during a game that it will take a couple of seasons to understand the true potential and deep level of gameplay 2K1 holds—a great achievement since the smart player controls allow first-time users to have fun from game one. Helping gamers identify dangerous situations, the player icon circling around the feet of the man you control will start to blink, indicating that you are seriously vulnerable to turning the ball over. Not only will this help prompt defensive players to possible steals, hardcore gamers can engage in a serious game of give and take, turning up the defensive intensity to an all-time high.

Online play is as sound as NFL2K1, too. During a four game session, only a slight hiccup occurred during a free throw opportunity and I still made the shot. Franchise mode is present for those not on the network and if that isn't enough, 2K1 spoons up some serious ghetto-ball with Street mode. Here, players can choose to go two-on-two all the way up to five-on-five! Street mode even offers up some legendary real-life courts, such as The Cage and Goat Park, and like the regional stadiums, each street park has been re-created as true to life as possible. These street games can be played on the network to boot.

Visual Concepts seems to be serving nothing but heat these days. On top of everything mentioned, a great collection of old-school ballers have been included for your enjoyment. Classic teams and players from the '50s through the '80s have been resurrected, and watching them in action, in their vintage get-ups, is pretty damn cool. GR

gamers' republic sports

NBA 2K1

by: t. stratton developer: visual concepts publisher: sega available: nov

Pulled straight out of a magician's hat, GameDay for the PS2 shows up ready for release in mid-November. Nearly nothing has been disclosed about the game until now and after watching it in action, there may be good reason. Because, unfortunately, GameDay falls short in nearly all categories for a PS2 title. And with Madden already on the shelves, GameDay's shortcomings are impossible to overlook.

Strange but true, the game looks to be only a slight upgrade from the PS version. Player renders are a bit more detailed, though the texture mapping used still has a 32-bit look about it, unlike Madden, which does a great job in taking video-game football closer to a true broadcast look and feel. The makers of GameDay did map actual player faces onto most of the models and they introduce an accurate lip-synching technology to close-ups while players bark, refs call, and concerned coaches bitch, but neither of these additions can help the stilted gameplay.

The action all moves at a very welcome 60 frames, so response and control is better than Madden. Still, the animation routines, tackle situations and running plays all suffer from bad collision detection. Players bump off of one another and never really wrap around each other to create a true sense of power or finesse. It also suffers from players not looking as if they are actually running downfield, but rather sliding their feet in the red zone—a problem the series has had since the day GameDay went polygonal. So even though the frame rate improves the gameplay, the lack of improvement in realism only brings the game's flaws closer to the surface.

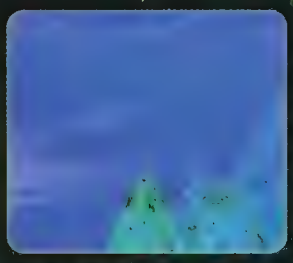
AI is also a road less traveled by the developers. It seems as if they took the same engine from GameDay '98 for the PS and dropped it straight in. Quick example: Choose a pitch play to your running back and let him run 10 yards out before dumping the ball. Want to know what happens? Well...the quarterback will still granny-pass the ball (that is, he'll underhand lob it with a sweet rainbow arch). Pretty good.

If you've been a fan of the GameDay series, you may still find this PS2 installment to your liking. But the lack of any true innovations in play mechanics along with the iffy gameplay leave this game in the 32-bit era of hardware limitations for me. This is a 128-bit super machine—these issues should be a thing of the past. **GR**

gamers' republic sports

GAMEDAY 2001

by: t. stratton developer: red zone int. publisher: scea available: nov



Ported from the Naomi, Sega Marine Fishing brings the arcade experience home in excellent visual style with brilliantly represented fish and superlative water environments. But that's only the beginning, because in addition to the Arcade mode, Sega has added a deep Original mode that'll have you playing for untold hours trying to unlock hundreds of hidden goodies.

The Arcade mode is rather short, so you may as well play through it first as doing so unlocks two additional levels in the Original mode, where the bulk of the gameplay lies. The ultimate goal seems to be to fill your virtual aquarium with as much stuff as you can unlock—a sperm whale, scuba divers, the Easter Island statues, all the fish in the game, etc. You can even unlock two other playable characters—your swarthy boat mate Masala, and the boat driver (let's call him Carlos), new equipment, attire, energizing or helpful limited-use power-ups, and environmental effects, like fireworks in the nighttime Fishing Port level. To begin your quest for items, first you need to acquire Item Points by playing the five mini-games: Fight Training, Lure Action Training, Casting Training, Fishing Training, and Total Weight Training. Once you acquire enough Item Points, you can go to the Free Fishing mode and fish at any of the five locations and start collecting items. Of course much of the game's appeal lies in the visuals, and Marine Fishing is stocked with a wide variety of nicely modeled deep-sea fish, including hammerhead sharks, blue marlin, sailfish, dolphin fish and shortfin mako sharks.

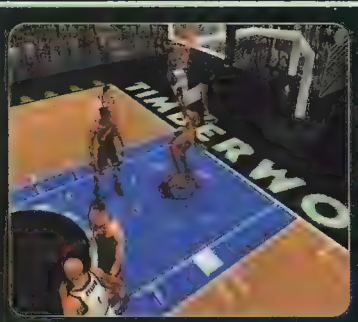
Two final notes: if you're going to reel in this game, grab the Dreamcast fishing rod as well; it's worth it, as it greatly enhances the simulation. And for those online with SegaNet, there's the option to go fish in a bigger sea and access email. So go fish! **GR**

gamers' republic sports

SEGA MARINE FISHING

by: m. puccini developer: wow ent. pub: sega available: now

A-



Konami and ESPN's first basketball game is a valiant effort, but falls short due to a laundry list of flaws, the worst of which is the game's seemingly perpetual slow motion; it's actually kind of humorous. It's also funny watching the players occasionally move around without even picking up their feet, just gliding across the floor, and the free throw mechanism is just wrong.

Another major concern is the AI. It just isn't good. You can dribble the ball...slowly...right in front of a defender and he won't even attempt to steal it—and when the roles are reversed and ***you*** attempt a steal, it's impossible. Additionally, rebounds are haphazard and there's no play calling, which is standard issue these days.

On the plus side, the graphics are clean and Brent Musberger calls a good game, but I was expecting more from a company like Konami. Hey, at least they chose to use music from the L.A.-based, hip-hop group, The Pharcyde. **GR**

gamers' republic sports

NBA 2NIGHT

by: m. puccini dev/pub: konami available: now

D+

We weren't sent a playable, but EA Sports did send a bevy of screenshots of what is obviously one hell of a great-looking basketball game for the PS2, NBA Live 2001.

Players are starting to look even more lifelike than previously exhibited in games such as NBA 2K, and the fans in the stands are looking better and better. (And look! Dr. J!)

Of course, the true test will come when we have a go at some hands-on play. With EA's track record with titles like Madden and FIFA, I'm confident Live 2001 will deliver the goods. **GR**

gamers' republic sports

NBA LIVE 2001

by: m. puccini dev: ea sports pub: ea available: fall

I was skeptical when I began playing Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing, thinking that it would offer the same ol' monotony - driving around a sun-baked oval for what can seem like an eternity. However, I was pleasantly surprised, as I discovered 23 different, challenging, real courses from around the globe and a wide variety of cars. Also, in addition to a points system to advance in circuit play, the Career mode includes tasks to complete that render cheat codes.

The CPU-controlled cars offer a suitable degree of challenge, often ramming the back of your car trying to send you into a tailspin, all with convincing physics. Graphically, the game is middle-of-the-road, with the exception of the view from inside the cockpit which is actually rather impressive - you can see the hand moving to shift gears and occasionally raise a fist to passing cars. Even the windshield wears realistically showing cracks when damaged, and actually shattering altogether if you smack the wall at top speed. J&L is a decent, albeit somewhat lackluster, racer in a crowded genre; it's a tough road, and J&L just can't quite muster enough to make it worth traveling. GR

gamers' republic sports

J & L RACING

by: m. puccini dev/pub: codemasters available: now

C+

I've got an idea! How about a NASCAR game with hood-mounted rocket launchers, unlimited ammo and turbo power-ups scattered around the track? Now that would be a kick-ass NASCAR game. Er, actually, that wouldn't be a NASCAR game.

Okay, I admit that the cars in NASCAR 2001 look pretty great compared to past NASCAR games, but that should be a given on the PS2. Good are the fairly detailed dash from inside the cockpit and the cool way the whole car frame moves when you hit the brakes. The PS2 obviously brings many refinements to the table. The problem is (and this may just be me) that my idea of a fun video game isn't taking a car around a circular track for 20 to 400 laps—especially when there's so little energy generated from the competition. Sure EA's included the Daytona track for the first time and sure all the big names in NASCAR are here, but after a few dozen laps... zzzzz. Adding to the woes are bland presentation, miniscule trackside detail, and the crowd looks like a wave of concrete. Pass. GR

gamers' republic sports

NASCAR 2001

by: m. puccini dev: ea sports pub: ea available: now

D+

When I initially started playing NCAA Final Four, I had to take the disc out off the PlayStation and check to make sure that it was NCAA Final Four 2001 and not NCAA Final Four 2000, because they look so much alike. It wasn't until I started a game that I realized that 2001 has some pretty impressive upgrades compared to last year's version, most notably the new, cleaner player models. These models seem easier to control in traffic too, and look a lot better when they're doing 360 slams, and dangling from the rim afterwards. The other improvement is in the AI evident in the more difficult attempts to steal the ball. Unfortunately, there are some disappointments as I'm not a big fan of the free-throw shooting mechanism. 989's patented Touch Shooting meter is back, and although probably helpful for some, I prefer to turn it off.

The ball-to-hoop physics have also been tweaked so now the ball bounces around more, lending a tad bit of tension to the shots.

2001 plays well, is fast-paced and looks decent. Should you buy another NCAA Basketball game on the PS to reap the benefits though? You make the call. GR

gamers' republic sports

NCAA FINAL FOUR

by: m. puccini dev: killer game pub: 989 sports available: now

C+

Many will see this game and automatically dream up visions of the old NES version, complete with King Hippo and Super Macho Man. And while the game holds neither of these great characters or any other of the fighters from the original, Mike Tyson Boxing for the PS does a good job of presenting a whole new cast of punch-drunk men in shorts.

The graphics are pretty solid, with good-looking player models and smooth animations. All of the moves have been key framed too, making the fights look and move naturally. Circling your opponent, creating distance between the two of you, then diving in for a flurry of attacks can be tense and the anticipation generates some genuine enjoyment—but not nearly enough to carry the game. GR

gamers' republic sports

MIKE TYSON BOXING

by: l. stratton dev/pub: codemasters available: now

C

PORTABLE GAMING ANALYSIS GAMES MOBILIZED

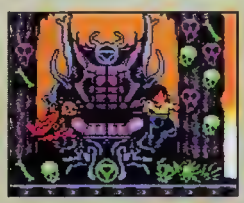
LITTLE NICKY

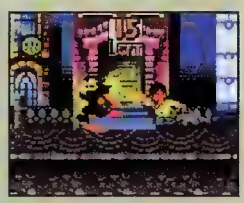
GAME BOY COLOR

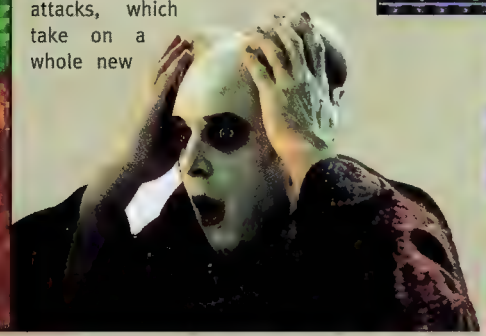
dev: ubi soft • pub: digital eclipse • avail: now
reviewed by d. halverson

B

For me, the Game Boy Color has been a pretty lackluster system. In fact, I almost liked it better when developers were pushing the envelope of black and white gaming. There seemed to be more attention to detail and play mechanics before the GB got color. With the exception of Nintendo's first-party ports and original softs like the Wario and Link games, few titles have taken advantage of the system's added umph. Rather, the GBC seems to have become the dumping ground for the bottom tier of licensing deals like The Emperor's New Groove (a tragedy of a GBC game) and Donald Duck, a by-the-numbers platformer. All the more reason I'm so impressed with the Adam Sandler co-executive produced Little Nicky from Digital Eclipse. It's obvious that both parties were interested in bringing an old-school 8-bit throwback to the GBC while pushing all of its buttons. Not only are the graphics and animation rich and skillfully portrayed, but the game is loaded with Sandler voice samples and a sampled metal soundtrack. The gameplay, rather than the usual GBC platform drivel, is actually quite compelling. It's as much about avoiding and timing maneuvers as it is Nicky's unholy arsenal of attacks, which take on a whole new complexion due to his earthbound circumstances. He can only conjure his abilities when he's hot (he's from hell you see)—so you see that truck exhaust? Well, go stand in it. The game makes me want to see the movie and wish I already had. The way in which Sandler gets to hell in the game is hella' cool and during the game every time he blows it, daddy (Beelzebub) looses a body part. I could go on and on about the game but I don't exactly have real estate here. It's mature, for sure, the side games rule (trust me) and the game is tweaked for skilled players. It's about friggin' time. It may be a cold day in hell before another worthy GBC game comes along so by all means take advantage of what is sure to be one of the last great GBC games as well as the sole mature game for the system. GR







YOGI BEAR GREAT BALLOON BLAST

GAME BOY COLOR

dev: taito • pub: BAM! entertainment • avail: now
reviewed by c. hoffman

B

Just ignore the lame Yogi Bear license and the less-than-spectacular graphics; this is one astoundingly addictive puzzle game. Based on the Taito game Pop'n-Pop, Great Balloon Blast has a bit of a Bust-A-Move feel, only with infinite chain combo possibilities. There are tons of puzzles and I found myself hooked for hours. One of the best puzzle games out there. GR

DEXTER'S LAB: ROBOT RAMPAGE

GAME BOY COLOR

dev: altron/taito • pub: BAM! entertainment • avail: now
previewed by c. hoffman

C

Based on Elevator Action, this game hasn't really stood the test of time that well. The action is basic jump-and-shoot, and patrolling the buildings trying to find the necessary icons to advance really isn't all that fun. Other than the monochrome look, nothing is particularly bad about it, but unless you're an old-school Elevator Action fan, you should wait for something meatier. GR

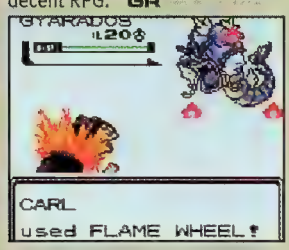
POKÉMON GOLD/SILVER

GAME BOY COLOR

dev: game freak • pub: nintendo • avail: now
reviewed by c. hoffman

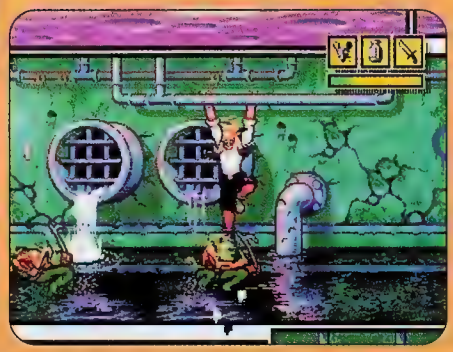
B-

By the time you read this, Pokémon Gold & Silver will already be in stores and you'll probably already have either (a) bought it instantly and are trying to catch 'em all, or (b) want Marill and his ilk to burn in Pokémon hell. If by some chance you're borderline, then you'll be pleased to know Pokémon G/S really isn't that bad. It's still sickeningly cute and all, but Nintendo has eased up the difficulty so you don't need to spend infinite hours raising levels and trying to hunt down the right type of Pokémon for the next battle. The game now actually feels more like an RPG than a collecting/fighting festival. Playing the game in real time is actually fairly cool, the color graphics add a lot, and of course there are still tons of different abilities and monsters if you really want to get into it. Plus, you can name your Pokémon after your coworkers for extra fun. In the end, Pokémon is no Dragon Warrior, but it's still a decent RPG. GR



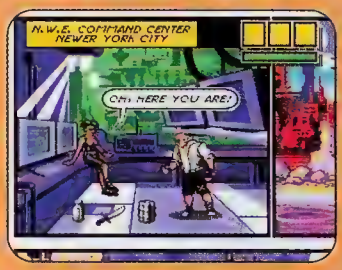
COMIX ZONE

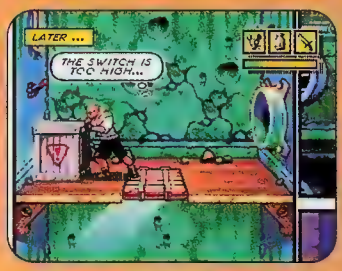
[publisher] sega
[genre] action
[system] genesis
[year] 1995

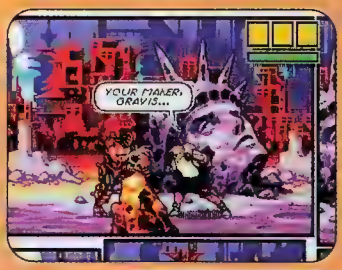


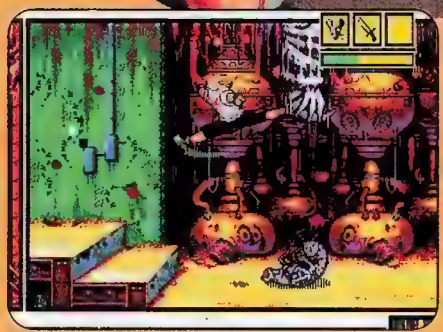
It's getting harder and harder to find 16-bit games that hold up these days. I'm finding more and more that as I go back to many games I remember as being exceptional that they look a lot better in my head than they do onscreen. I played thirty Genesis games before popping in Comix Zone and was instantly taken back by just how great this game still looks and plays. One of the best American-developed games of its generation Comix Zone came out of STI (Sega Technical Institute) one of Sega of America's off-shoots back in the day when they crept by Nintendo to become number one. The concept remains fresh to this day: a comic book artist, Sketch Turner, gets swept into his own comic by the main villain who endeavors to take his place in the real world. Brought to life by stunning animation, exceptional play mechanics and ingenious level, or rather, page design, the game actually comes off like a living comic as you move from panel to panel reading and playing the engaging story. Thankfully, one of Stretch's characters is a shapely babe who greets him as he enters the comic and is in constant communique alerting Sketch of the perils ahead. The action consists mainly of polished beat-'em-up style confrontations in each panel, minor puzzle-solving elements, platforming, and clever item usage. It comes together perfectly though to create a game that is well worth tracking down if you're looking for something to feed your Nomad or Genesis. Comix Zone stands as one of the finest completely American produced 2D video games ever.

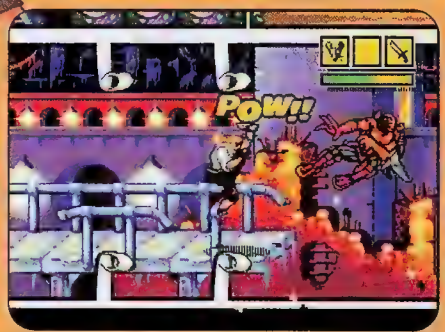
-Dave Halverson











WORLD REPUBLIC

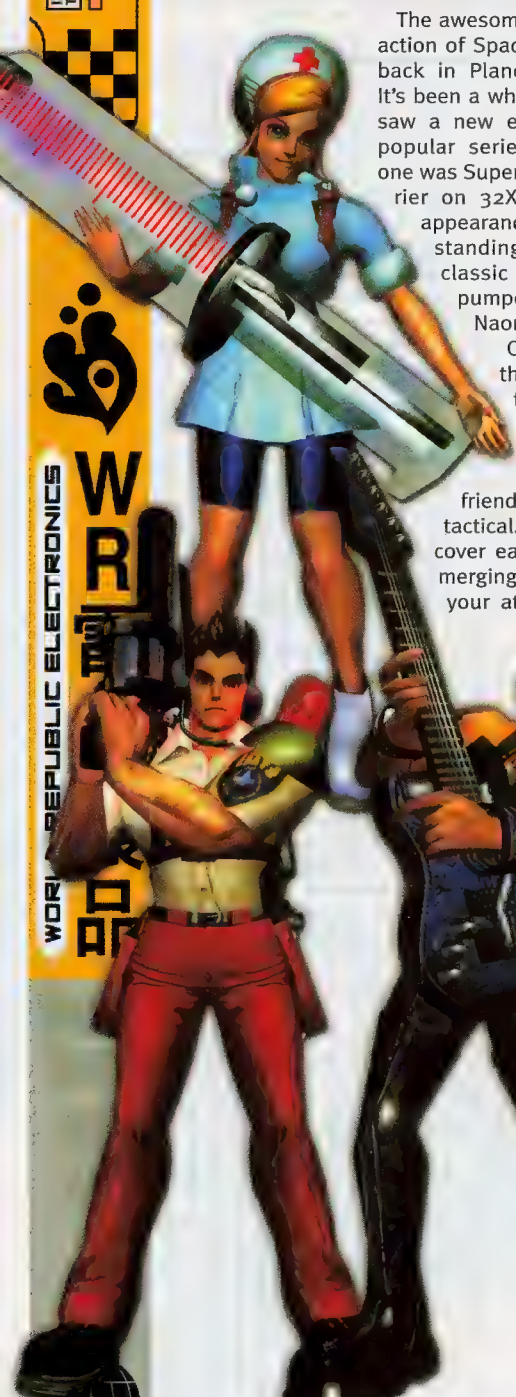
[i] So much stuff's coming out of Japan this month that we could barely squeeze it all in! Sega's been keeping busy with the awesome Planet Harriers and DC ports of Fighting Vipers 2 and Daytona USA. Namco has two new light gun games, Ninja Assault and Golgo 13, and Tokyo Highway Battle comes to PS2. Plus the lowdown on Suiko Gaiden and more!

AC

arcade / ac

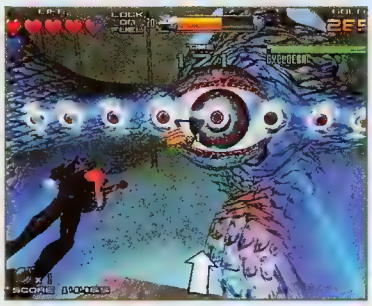
World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **sega** • available in japan **december**

PLANET HARRIERS



The awesome, addictive action of Space Harrier is back in Planet Harriers! It's been a while since we saw a new entry in the popular series (the last one was Super Space Harrier on 32X, Shenmue appearance nonwithstanding), but the classic gameplay pumped up with Naomi visuals looks to be incredible.

One of the biggest enhancements is that Planet Harriers is designed for two-player cooperative gaming, and players can even join forces over the Internet. Although you can play by yourself, teaming with a friend promises to be much more fun and tactical. In two-player mode, players can cover each other or recover their health by merging powers, although you cannot use all your attacks while combined. Instead of just using your laser gun to blast everything in sight, the Harriers have a lock-on missile function, similar to that found in Afterburner or Panzer Dragoon. By destroying enemies with lock-on missiles, they turn into gold that can be used to buy items and new parts, and the locking on to more enemies simultaneously will net you more cash.



Four uniquely styled characters are selectable in Planet Harriers: Glenn, a policeman whose weapon is his gun; Cory, an 18-year-old nurse who uses a syringe as her weapon; Nick, a major league closing pitcher who uses a bat as his weapon; and X, a guitarist who fights with his guitar. Although they sure look different, we aren't sure if there are any differences in how they play.

When Space Harrier debuted back in 1985, I was a junior high school student, and although school law mostly prohibited us from entering arcades, we went anyway just to play Space Harrier. Hopefully Planet Harriers will elicit the same kind of excitement when it hits this December.

-T. MIURA

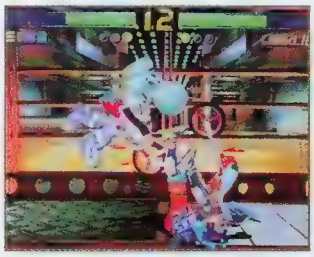
PlanetHarr… …Amusement Division 2000.

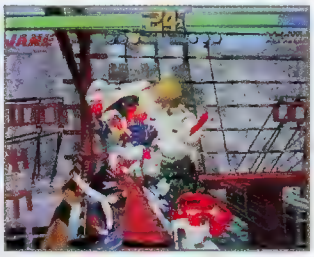
sega dreamcast / dc

World Republic Review • developer **am2** • publisher **sega** • available in japan **winter**

FIGHTING VIPERS 2

Better late than never. It was 1998 when Sega's Fighting Vipers 2 was released on the Model 3 arcade hardware, but only now is the hit game scheduled to be released for Dreamcast. Like in the original FV, each fighter is equipped with body armor, and a powerful blow can smash it off amidst spectacular graphic effects. New to the game are extra defensive and offensive strategies when near walls, and Super KO combos that can finish off your opponent even if you are losing. Body parts that don't have armor take more damage, so you have to strategically think how you play the game. Like Virtua Fighter, it is a fighting game that requires thinking, not button-mashing.





Why this AM2 fighter has taken so long to come out remains undisclosed, but, without any major compromises like the original did on Saturn, FV2 for DC looks promising. Director Kataoka and his team are working toward a complete, perfect port of the game. "The gameplay is deep in strategy and fun in playing, although two years old," said Kataoka.

Sega hasn't revealed if there will be new options or characters in the DC version, but an arcade-perfect port is exciting enough.

-J.SAKAI

AC

arcade / ac

World Republic Review • developer/**publisher namco** • available in japan **tba**

NINJA ASSAULT

A ninja with a gun in historical Japan? OK, so it doesn't make much sense, but if the game is fun, who cares? Namco's third Naomi game, Ninja Assault, is a simple light-gun shooter set in feudal Japan where you have to rescue a princess who was kidnapped by an evil ninja clan. You'll face countless evil ninjas and monsters trying to stop you from getting anywhere near the princess—an overwhelming task that couldn't be accomplished with normal weapons, which is why you wield the "Evil Destroyer Gun." Given that you're a ninja with superhuman agility, the game moves vertically as well as horizontally, and the vibrant 3D environments allow for truly dynamic points of view.

Namco's arcade light-gun games have been awesome in the past, and Ninja Assault should be just as impressive. The release date in Japan has not yet been decided. **-J.SAKAI**

PS2

playstation 2 / ps2

World Republic Preview • developer/publisher **genki** • available in japan **winter**

SHUTOKO BATTLE ZERO

Genki's Shutoko Battle (Tokyo Xtreme Racer in the States) is one of the more popular driving games for Dreamcast, and now a version is coming soon for PlayStation 2. Shutoko Battle Zero is an enhancement of the recently released Shutoko Battle 2 for DC. The differences are minimal and mostly cosmetic. The cars in the PS2 version are even shinier, with more lighting effects and environmental mapping, but I could not find that much difference between the PS2 and the DC version in overall appearance. In terms of the gameplay, the most exciting addition is centered around the control method. In addition to supporting the Dual Shock 2, Shutoko Battle Zero will support force-feedback steering wheels. Though it was unclear at press time if the game will support the so-called GT Force system used in Gran Turismo 3 (sure to become the standard), the game was shown at TGS with a USB force-feedback wheel, though its effect was not quite as pronounced as that of GT3. Shutoko Battle Zero is due to be released in Japan this winter.

-T. MIURA

Fighting Vipers 2 © Sega/cri 1998, 2000.

Gamers Republic GR12 0-000
0 31441 07950
World Republic
Monthly Import Game Reviews
ワールド リパブリック
A 323-91

sega dreamcast / dc

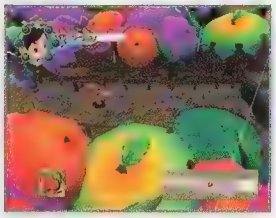
World Republic Preview • developer /publisher **sega** • available in japan **now**

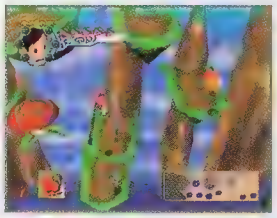
NAPPLE TALE

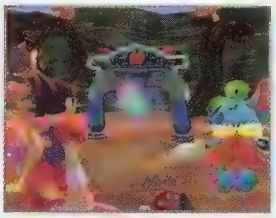
Sega's Napple Tale—Arsia in Daydream is one of those peculiar titles that people will either love or just not get. What looks like a generic platformer at first glance is actually much more. Whether that's a good thing or bad remains to be seen. The Alice in Wonderland-like setting is at once surreal, disturbing in its somberness, and ultra fruity.

Arsia is stuck somewhere between sleep and dreams and to return to her world, wherever that is, she must solve the problems of this peculiar world by returning its seasons. What this basically amounts to is a lot of role-playing between the action in order to open up new seasons, which accomplishing in Japanese...well, forget it. The action, which is rich in play mechanics, shows great promise, so we hope someone adopts Arsia for a shot at the U.S. DC scene.

-D. Halverson







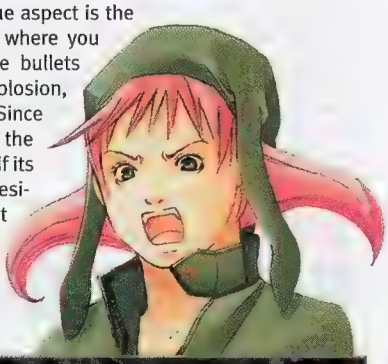
sega dreamcast / dc

World Republic Review • developer/publisher **sega** • available in japan **tba**

TYPE-X

Sega's latest 3D survival horror action game, Type X Spiral Nightmare, is on its way to Dreamcast. Set on a space colony orbiting Mars, Type X contains beautifully detailed graphics, a variety of cool monsters, and gorgeous lighting effects. The game starts when the main characters, Yohan Goodman, Lod Steel, and Jesica Streap, investigate a system malfunction and discover the colony overrun with monsters. The trio escapes to Mars, where more action takes place, mainly consisting of talking to NPCs to gain information and killing the creatures. One unique aspect is the game's bullet creation system, where you can use monster DNA to make bullets with special effects such as explosion, meltdown, freeze, or lightning. Since we still haven't played the game yet, we aren't sure if its play style is closer to Resident Evil or Maken X, but we'll have more coverage as soon as a playable version arrives.

-T.Miura



Type X © Sega 2000. Napple Tale © Sega 2000.

PS2

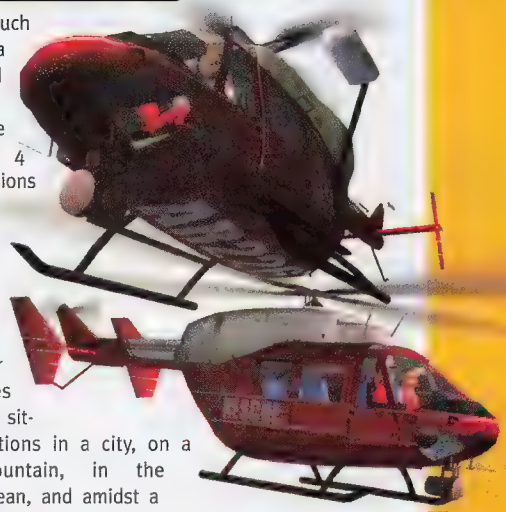
playstation 2 / ps2

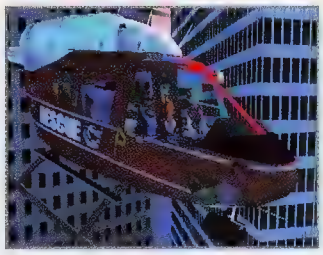
World Republic Review • developer **shogakukan** • publisher **ask** • available in japan **spring 2001**

AIR RANGER

Rescue Heli Air Ranger from Ask is the first game of its type for PlayStation 2. Not an action game, Air Ranger is more of a simulation in the vein of Sega's Airline Pilot or Tokyo Bus Guide Tour. In this Air Ranger, you have to master the controls of a helicopter in order to rescue people in various situations. The control is very realistic since Ask got advice from Kawasaki Juko (a Japanese jet and helicopter company) and the Japanese air force. Although Air Ranger is a simulator, the game does have a back story. You are a member of Air Ranger, the elite helicopter team of the Search and Rescue Company. There are two game modes: Beginner and Rescue. In Beginner mode, you practice basics, such as how to control a helicopter and how to rescue people. In Rescue mode, there are 4 stages with 3 missions in each. In each mission, you will be awarded medals according to your time and your technique. The four varied stages include hazardous situations in a city, on a mountain, in the ocean, and amidst a blazing fire. Our first impression of Air Ranger left us feeling that it needs more thrills such as intense sound effects and dynamic camera work. Fortunately there's still time before the game's release to turn Air Ranger into something fun and unique.

-T.MIURA





Dreamcast Preview

DAYTONA USA

GAME BY SEGA

Well, what we really wanted was a port of Daytona 2 on DC, but considering that the original, featuring 40 cars traveling the track at once, was one of the best arcade games ever made, I guess we'll settle for a perfect conversion of it on Dreamcast. Actually, Daytona DC is beyond arcade perfect. It features the original arcade courses, the courses from the Saturn's Daytona USA Circuit Edition, plus all-new courses for a total of eight tracks. Even better, the DC version will feature an online battle mode. Four players can compete over the Net, and according to Mr. Nagoshi, the game's producer, the network mode will be fully retained in the U.S. Details about the Net battle are not yet clear, but Nagoshi-san says he is thinking of including other network elements, too. This exciting arcade racing game will be released this winter. Now we just need Sega to release the sequel.

-T.MIURA

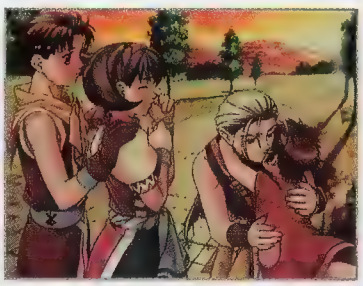
PlayStation

playstation / psx

World Republic Review • developer **konami** • publisher **konami** • available in japan **now**

SUIKO GAIDEN VOL. 1

You can look at Genso Suiko Gaiden Vol. 1 in two ways. You can look at it strictly as a game, in which case you'll be thoroughly disappointed that it's nothing but a digital novel, with no gameplay to back up the gorgeous stills and awesome music, and you won't be able to understand anything unless you know Japanese. Or you can look at this title as a completely awesome collectors' item for Suikoden fanatics like myself. Both the original and Suikoden II rank in my top 20 games of all time, and I'm absolutely in love with the characters, designs, and incredible fantasy world that Konami has created. That said, I enjoyed every minute of Suiko Gaiden, from the jaw-dropping anime intro (it alone makes this game worth getting) to the cliffhanger ending. The visuals re-create Suikoden II landmarks in astounding hand-drawn beauty, and the story fills in the behind-the-scenes gaps with drama and humor. Sure it's short, and Konami would have been better off making it a full-blown anime, but considering that there's no chance in hell that Konami will bring this out in the U.S., I encourage any and all Suikoden maniacs to import immediately. -C. HOFFMAN



B-

Air Ranger © Ask 2000.

Gamers' Republic GR12
0 31441 07950
World Republic
Monthly Import Game Reviews
ワールド リパブリック
A 323-91

World Republic Interview

MIJK VAN DIJK INTERVIEW

Mijk van Dijk, producer, remixer, and DJ from Berlin, has more than a passing interest in the video-game music scene. In 1996, Mijk performed a live set during his birthday party in Berlin using nothing but a PlayStation and a European music game called Fluid. In 1997, he produced the soundtrack for Exact's Ghost in the Shell PS game, and has since provided tracks for Ridge Racer V, and most recently, the entire soundtrack for From Software's Armored Core 2. He plans to release a solo album in early 2001, and is also working on an ambient album.

GR: How did you become involved in the Armored Core 2 soundtrack?

MVD: While I was playing Armored Core-Battle Of Arena again after a long period of not playing it, I thought, "Wow, this game is so good, it always pulls me back. It's a shame that there is no new version out yet!" and I e-mailed this to my agent at Sony Music Entertainment Japan and also made the remark that I would really love to do the soundtrack for a new version. He somehow contacted From Software and told them about it and in fact they were already working on a new version for the PS2 and seemed to like the idea of me doing a soundtrack a lot. That's how it all started.

GR: Are you a serious gamer?

MVD: I guess I game quite often and seriously. And I have played all three Armored Core versions for PlayStation with great enthusiasm. Just to explain: only the first version of AC was out in Europe. When I found the first AC in Japan, I played it without understanding the mission briefing, since I can't speak or read Japanese. So sometimes I would do levels over and over again, just to find out which items to get, whom to destroy and whom to protect. And I did the same with the other two versions. Is this seriously otaku enough for you?

GR: Could you describe your approach to creating game music? How does your approach differ from when you create music designed to stand on its own?

MVD: Game music has a different function. Music for the club is supposed to make people dance and should be a good tool for the DJ. In a game, it must be much more subliminal, since the focus of the gamer is more on the game itself than on the music. I would compare its function more to a film soundtrack. Of course you can't synchronize the game music to the scene like in a movie, since a game is interactive. So it must provide an overall atmosphere to the game level, may it be energetic like in a fighting game or pushing forward like in a racing game or maybe mysterious like in an RPG. With my tracks for Ridge Racer V, I tried to create a fast speed feeling that would also work very well on the dance floor. My intro music for Armored Core 2 was composed to match the brilliant pictures of the intro movie, and this maybe wouldn't work that well in a club. But in the end, I want all my music to be good music that can always stand on its own.

GR: What hardware and software do you use to create your music?

MVD: I've got a studio full of equipment. I just discovered the thrill of software synths (Pro-Five for VST), but basically I prefer to use hardware. I like to do sampling tricks with the Yamaha A-5000. My favorite synth is the Access Virus and I've worked with Cubase since the Atari days, and now I'm on the Mac with VST.

GR: What kind of music do you listen to and what genres of music do you like the most?

MVD: I listen to all music. I grew up on rock and funk music. I like soul and good pop music (early '80s). At home I prefer ambient and relaxed electronic music. Sure I also check all my new techno records for my set and do some mixes and in the car I like to play cool and easy house music from labels like Naked Music. I think that music is too beautiful and too precious to reduce my taste on only one style. And for me as a producer, it's good to have a broad musical knowledge.

GR: Who are your favorite artists?

MVD: For the techno scene, probably Technasia, Thomas Schumacher, Laurent Garnier, Joel Mull and Takkyu Ishino.

GR: If you were to create music for the same game title in a different market such as Europe or U.S., would you compose music differently?

MVD: No, a good game is also like a piece of art and should have a unique character.

GR: Do you collaborate with the other artists or exchange idea with the other artists?

MVD: I used to do that a lot in the past with people like Claude Young, Thomas Schumacher, Quazar, Humate, Paul M. and Johannes Talirz for my Teamwork-Album and with Tobynation and Takkyu Ishino for our projects on Frogman Records from Japan. Now I will work alone again for my next album.

GR: I heard that you are a big fan of Masamune Shirou. I really liked Firecracker in Ghost in the Shell soundtrack. The music matches with the theme and environment. Was the AC2 music more difficult to conceptualize than Firecracker?

MVD: Not at all. Since I knew the feel of Armored Core already from the first versions and also liked the game music from those parts a lot, I had a clear concept in my mind. And yes, I am a big fan of Shirou-san and can't wait until the follow up of *Ghost in The Shell* will be finally released in English or German. I've seen bits of the story already in Shonen Jump magazine and it looks great.

Arcade Preview

GOLGO 13

GAME BY NAMCO

BY J. SAHAI

Golgo 13 is one of the most popular and long-running comic series ever in Japan. Over 400 comic stories have been written, and it has spun off into anime and video games, including two that came to the U.S. back on the NES. Now Golgo 13 is back for a new arcade game where the objective is to become an accomplished hired assassin—Lieberman, play your heart out. The game uses a light gun with a "precision calculation module" targeting system for accurate aiming. Whether or not you live up to the legend depends on how well you aim and how fast you execute your missions within the time limit. If you perform well, your credibility goes up and you receive more missions along with increased pay. The game has three modes: Practice, Story, and Golgo. In Story mode, the plot unfolds via a digital comic style on the screen, then you engage in sniping. But the task is not easy and the target is not always human. For example, you have to shoot the rope of a target that is water skiing or the tire of a moving car to make it look like an accident. Golgo mode has the same missions, but they're even more difficult and come in random order. No word has been given regarding a U.S. release of the game.

THE WORLD OF
gamers'
Republic
MEETS
centerseat
ELECTRONIC
GAMING
ENTERTAINMENT
SHOWS
RELEASES
REVIEWS
THE
FUTURE
NOW
experience
centerseat.com
your interactive entertainment network

A GAMERS' REPUBLIC MONTHLY SECTION

アニメ-R

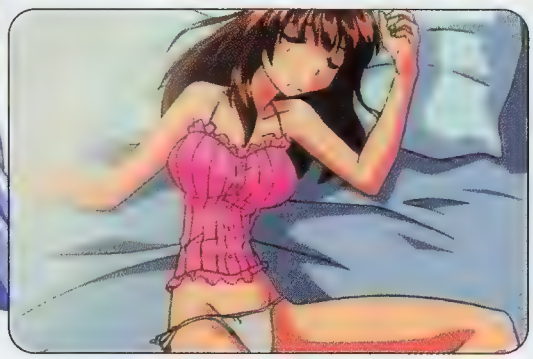
NANAKO DVD VOL. 2

REVIEWED BY DAVE HALVERSON
•2000 PIONEER ENTERTAINMENT
75 MINUTES • BI-LINGUAL
★★★★ ADVENTURE/COMEDY

Only in anime—and I've never meant that so wholeheartedly. If Nanako were live action TV there would be whole talk shows dedicated to ramrodding it, and women's groups the planet over would trade in their KD Lang CDs for a shot at its makers. In other words, guys will love it! Imagine, if you will... A brilliant scientist specializing in bio-engineering creates the ultimate Cyborg – Venus 2000 – a towering mech that will become the military's finest weapon. Thing is, he needs a human brain to synch with it to make the thing work. Now, if this were American cinema, this is the part where Dr. Ogami would go out and snatch a homeless person or some other dreg we don't care about for his prey, but hey, this is Japan, baby! In this case he spots a huge- (no, make that mammoth) breasted teen playing tennis at the local high school and...buys her from her parents! Doh! From there he trains her (which borders on torture) to harness the power suit that she must bond with before being inserted into the huge cyborg. Post insertion, however, Nanako's strong will takes over and she rejects her new body, bursting out of its heart and blowing it to smithereens.

So what's a crazed scientist to do? Nanako becomes the assistant nurse at the doc's private hospital while he tries to figure out what the heck went wrong. In the meantime, as the episodes unfold, the further into the saga we get, the more we begin to discover about not only Ogami, who treats Nanako like a lab rat—even though he supposedly loves her (?)—but his father's checkered past. It appears that Dad developed the first prototype "Nana-go," which father and son adopted like the family pet, so of course when it—or she —died, it was little Ogami's most traumatic childhood experience.

Things beginning to come into view? Besides wall-to-wall bouncing boobs—the series stock and trade—in episode three, *Operation III: The Psycho Patient*, the doctor's so-called friends at "The Organization" decide to drop a serial killer off at the doc's hospital for some tests, and he turns out to be one of their experiments gone awry. The patient, who no sooner mutates into a large salivating beast, takes after Nanako and all hell breaks loose. In episode four, *Fire-Crackers*, while the doctor is away visiting his dad, muttering something about a cure for the new Nanako, Nanako is put on display at a huge weapons show (and yes, she's the weapon). During her demonstration, Doctor Ogami's arch nemesis shows up with a mech of his own and, long story short, ends up taking the whole staff (three nutty characters I could write a chapter about besides Nanako) hostage. By the end of the episode, the hospital is leveled, and *Amazing Nurse Nanako* begins to be about more than just the torture of a teenage girl with massive breasts. Damn! **GR**



© GAMERS' REPUBLIC ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

They're doing it all for LOVE!

VIRGIN FLEET

From the creator of *Sakura Wars!*

Coming Soon to DVD! $19.99 Dubbed VHS

THE SLAYERS TRY: SHOWDOWN!

$19.99 Dubbed or Subtitled VHS

THE SLAYERS TRY: COLLECTOR'S BOXED SET 2

$69.99 Dubbed or Subtitled VHS

PHOTON
THE IDIOT ADVENTURES

From the creative team behind Tenchi Muyo!

Complete Series: All 6 episodes

$39.99 Dual Language DVD

THE SLAYERS NEXT DVD COLLECTION

Contains episodes 27-52

$129.99 Dual Language DVD Collector's Boxed Set

Both *The Slayers Next DVD Collection* & *The Slayers Try Collector's Boxed Set 2* contain an offer for a FREE Slayers Chroma-Cel™ while supplies last.

Available at all participating locations

TOWER RECORDS · BOOKS · VIDEO · BEST BUY · SATURDAY MATINEE · SUNCOAST MOTION PICTURE COMPANY *We Know Movies* · VENTURA DISTRIBUTION, INC.

and other fine stores

Check out the **BLOWOUT** prices on subtitled anime VHS at AnimeOne.com zShop

www.animeone.com/zshop/

CENTRAL PARK MEDIA®

THE ANIME ZONE®

To order call *Manganamia*™ CLUB OF AMERICA: 1-800-626-4277

www.centralparkmedia.com www.animeone.com ADL: Japanimation Station
www.software-sculptors.com Keyword: Japanimation

WORLD PEACE THROUGH SHARED POPULAR CULTURE™

U.S.MANGA SOFTWARE SCULPTORS

Prices reflect suggested retail prices & may vary in Canada. All titles not available at all locations. Promotional materials layout & copy ©2000 Central Park Media Corporation. Original Japanese version "The Slayers Next" © 1996 H. Kanzaka/R. Araizumi/Kadokawa/TV Tokyo/SOFTX. Original Japanese version "The Slayers Try" © 1997 H. Kanzaka/R. Araizumi/Kadokawa/TV Tokyo/SOFTX. Central Park Media, U.S. Manga Corps, Japanimation Station, Mangamania and logos are registered trademarks of Central Park Media Corporation. Software Sculptors and logo are registered trademarks of Software Sculptors Ltd. AnimeOne.com is a trademark of Binary Media Works, Inc. All other products are trademarks of their respective owners. All rights reserved.

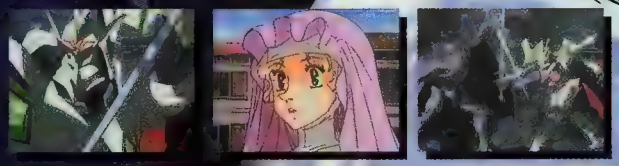
BIG GUNS.
星方武侠
OUTLAW STAR
FUTURE HERO NEXT GENERATION
Outlaw Star © MORNING STAR • SUNRISE / SHUEISHA • SOTSU AGENCY
BIG ROBOTS.
Gene Starwind roams the frontiers of space with an inexperienced crew all the while, chased by ferocious felines, and cut-throat outlaws...no matter how fast they go, danger always manages to catch up to them.
MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM WING
Have the Gundams been defeated? With the colonies safety in jeopardy, the Gundam pilots have no choice but to surrender. Still, no one knows where Heero is, or if he's even still alive! Meanwhile, as OZ turns its attention to outer space, Trowa is determined to stop them!
Outlaw Star
DVD Collection 1
Bilingual DVD
Episodes 1-9
AVAILABLE ON VHS AND DVD
SRP: $44.98
STREET DATE
10.3.2000
Available at these fine stores:
samgoody
SUNCOAST
MOTION PICTURE COMPANY
MEGASTORE
TOWER RECORDS
BEST BUY
For More Information, Please visit:
www.bandai-ent.com or call 1-877-77-ANIME
Gundam Wing © 2000 Sunrise / Sotsu Agency. •

BIG ADVENTURE.

Escaflowne © Sunrise • TX

FOX KIDS

Escaflowne™



AS SEEN ON CARTOON NETWORK TOONAMI

AVAILABLE ON VHS AND DVD

Gundam Wing
Showdown in Space (V.4)
Way of the Warrior (V.5)
- Edited/Unedited VHS

3 Episodes - 75 min.
SRP: $14.98

Operation 03
- Bilingual DVD

5 Episodes - 125 min.
SRP: $24.98

AVAILABLE NOW

Drawn into a strange vortex with the swordsman Van, Hitomi is thrust into the strange world of Gaea. Chased by the evil Empire of Zaibach, Van and Hitomi will encounter both allies and enemies in an effort to unlock the secrets within Escaflowne.

AVAILABLE ON VHS AND

Escaflowne
Dragons and Destiny (V.1)
4 Episodes - 100 min.
- Fox Kids Version VHS

SRP: $14.98
- English Language VHS

SRP: $19.98
- Bilingual DVD

SRP: $29.98 DVD VIDEO

STREET DATE
10.3.2000

Leading the Digital Revolution

Exclusively Distributed by: Pioneer

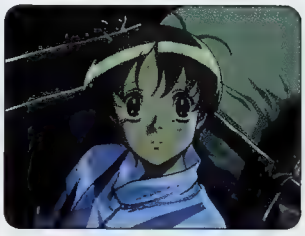
Produced by: BANDAI entertainment

Bandai Entertainment
PO Box 6054 Cypress, CA 90630
E-mail: support@bandai-ent.com

ESCAFLOWNE DVD VOL. 1: DRAGONS AND DESTINY

REVIEWED BY SHOLA AKINNUSO
•2000 BANDAI ENTERTAINMENT
100 MINUTES • BI-LINGUAL
★★★★ ACTION/DRAMA

Escaflowne, we'll mourn your cancellation on the Fox network, and shall remember you as the revolutionary fantasy anime that you were, but you'll certainly live on in the new Bandai DVD release, which is more than an apt tribute. Housing four episodes per DVD, *Escaflowne* is worth every penny with the inclusion of the English version (the full version in English, not the edited-for-television version), and the powerful Japanese subtitled version, which is honestly how this melodrama was meant to be viewed. Widely considered the best western-type fantasy anime ever, Bandai's first volume of *Vision of Escaflowne* is arguably the best four episodes of the series, combining everything that made the series great, including the epic soundtrack, top-notch direction, and a most memorable cast of characters. Here we follow Lord Van, the young heir to the kingdom of Fanelia in his quest to rebuild his destroyed homeland attacked by the evil Zaibach Empire. The series' backbone, as with most teenage-based anime, is within the fledgling romance between Van and the young Hitomi, as the two work in these four episodes to figure out their places in the greater scheme of things; in Hitomi's case, to understand the reason why she was transported to the mystical land of Gaia from her native Earth, and for Van, to manage the impossible weight of responsibility for his dead kingdom, as well as trying to deny a love for his seemingly duplicitous brother who has, for all intents, become the enemy. Episodes one through four introduce us to the rest of the supporting cast as well, including Van's handsome-yet-virtuous friend/rival Allen Schezar: The Knight, and Merle, Van's doting feline-human aide. Few anime get right into the action as successfully as *Vision of Escaflowne*, and its cult status is because of the crew of characters that viewers instantly become endeared with (see episode two's amazing conclusion to make you a Merle fan) and the stunning action sequences (now crystal clear on the DVD); *Escaflowne* is one of the best anime-based DVDs you can get for you buck. Despite the fact that the American acting is pretty putrid, Bandai thankfully left the Japanese version intact, including the option for English subtitles, all of the *Escaflowne* trailers, and considerably more. Well worth the money for fantasy fans looking for something a bit more serious than, say, *Dragon Half*, and wanting something that is easily on par with the amazing *Record of Lodoss Wars*. The *Vision of Escaflowne* is your series, and Bandai's made it cheap enough where it's damn near a steal. GR



ANIMENATION.com

THE ANIME SOURCE

1-888-MY-ANIME

NAL FANTASY © Urban Vision

THE LARGEST SELECTION OF ANIME ON THE WEB

SHOP
> VIDEO > IMPORT CDS > MANGA > TOYS AND MORE

FREE EMAIL
> WEB BASED > OVER 50 ANIME DOMAINS AVAILABLE

NEWS
> FRESHEST > HOTTEST NEWS ON THE NET

LINKS
> THOUSANDS OF LINKS > SEARCHABLE > SITE RANKINGS

CONTESTS
> FREE STUFF ALL THE TIME

MAILING LIST
> WEEKLY UPDATES OF NEWS AND PRODUCTS

GREAT PRICES, SELECTION & SERVICE

ANIMENATION

WWW.ANIMENATION.COM

THE SAMURAI

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•2000 ADV FILMS
90 MINUTES•ENGLISH SUBBED
★★★ ACTION/DRAMA

Takeshi Chimatsuri is not your average middle-school student in Japan. Takeshi is a samurai, and he takes his heritage very seriously. Seriously enough that he wears traditional samurai garb to school every day along with a sword. Takeshi is the very soul of honor, as he tries to be helpful in all he does. When Takeshi was a young boy his father fought the head of another family and won a small dagger in fair combat. Takeshi received this dagger from his father as a gift, and now that his father is no longer with him, Takeshi treasures this dagger and keeps it with him always.

Unfortunately for Takeshi, there are a couple of new transfer students at his school. They are Akari and Kageri Toki, the twin daughters of the samurai who originally owned Takeshi's precious dagger. Akari and Kageri have been thoroughly trained in the art of Ninjutsu and charged by their grandmother to return the dagger to the Toki family. The girls will use lethal force if they have to. Akari and Kageri have one small problem, though: Akari is deathly scared of being touched by a member of the opposite sex. Any touch and she will scream and react with swift, brutal violence. Kageri is exactly the opposite of her sister. She is all too happy to disappear into the bushes with any guy that shows the slightest interest in her. So Takeshi spends most of his days at school, running from the Toki twins and trying to avoid a fight without giving up his father's dagger.

The Samurai is a simplistic, fun anime, with an amusing plot and older character designs. The designs resemble *Ranma 1/2*, but this does not take away from it one bit. While this may not be a must-have anime, it is certainly a fun addition to anyone's collection. **GR**

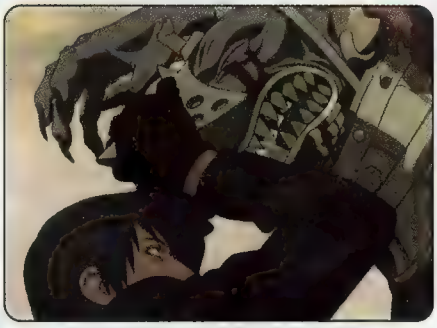
BLUE SUBMARINE NO. 6 VOL. 1-4

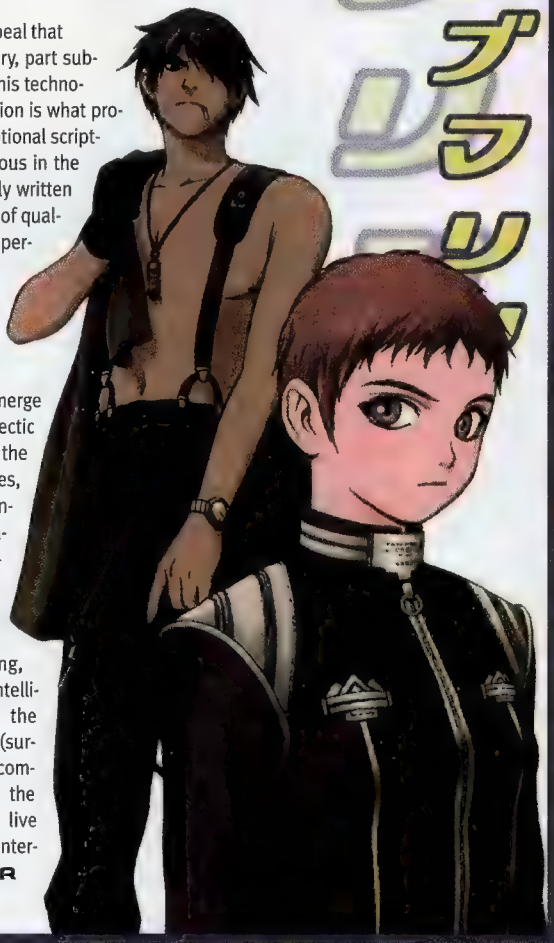
REVIEWED BY SHOLA AKINNUSO
•2000 BANDAI ENTERTAINMENT
160 MINUTES • BI-LINGUAL
★★★★ SCI-FI/ACTION

Bandai seems to acquire great original series from Japan. From *Gundam* to *Bebop* to *Outlaw Star*, the company has an obsession with bringing out the hippest anime in Japan, and few efforts reveal that love more than their flawless localization of director Mahiro Maeda's 2D/CGI marriage, *Blue Submarine No.6*. If you can forgive these insane prices (20 bucks for a 30-minute DVD is madness), you'll cool down once you hear the quality of the emotionally charged voice acting – possibly some of the best American dubbing I've heard. Bandai, take a bow.

Blue Sub No. 6 is quality all around on DVD. Crisp and polished, there's a big-budget appeal that instantly sways fans of both intellectual anime and action junkies. Part social commentary, part submarine war epic, this gorgeous high-drama follows an instinctual clash between man and his technological arrogance, and the animal uprising that fights for their chance at supremacy. Passion is what propels *Blue Sub* to being noted as simply a marvel in technical achievement. The deeply emotional scripting (there are some spirited dialogues between many of the characters—especially obvious in the English version) manages to force viewer intimacy with this band of soldiers, in four tightly written 30-minute epi-dramas. Few moments compare to the series finale too, where the osmosis of quality writing, acting, and life-like animation shine in a duel of words that can only be called a performance. All parties involved should take a bow.

While *Blue Sub*'s ripe with gray heroes and hopeful villains, the true stars are Mahiro Maeda, with his kinetic and downright inspired direction (easily on par with the best of *Bebop*), and Range Murata's memorable character design. Organic CGI environments merge with gorgeous 2D artistry to give *Blue Sub*'s eclectic cast both a visual and emotional stamp on the viewer, despite even the shortest of screen times, and a world so vibrant (with its enormous, organic, whale-like warships and scenes of underwater dystopia) that it couldn't possibly be imitated in live action. This, Murata and Maeda recognize, is what makes Japanese animation the leading medium for fantastic storytelling, and *Blue Sub* is one of the few intelligent animations that progress the genre with rebellious CGI imagery (surpassing even *Titan A.E.*), and compelling social analysis. Blurring the line between animation and live action, *Blue Sub* is more than entertainment, it's progressive art. **GR**





Pioneer

Once again the Page is Turned...

MYSTERIOUS PLAY
FUSHIGI YUGI

Don't miss the wonderful sequels to the TV series: The Mysterious Play/Fushigi Yugi

Illusions v.1 November 2000 - Memories v.2 December 2000 - Reflections 1 January 2001

November 2000 Releases		
3x3 Eyes - The Legend of the Divine Demon V.2	VHS-Dub	$29.98
3x3 Eyes - The Legend of the Divine Demon V.2	VHS-Sub	$29.98
Cardcaptor Sakura - The Clow V.1	DVD-Sub	$29.98
Cardcaptor Sakura - The Clow V.1	VHS-Sub	$24.98
Cardcaptors - Tests of Courage V.1	DVD-Dub	$24.98
Cardcaptors - Tests of Courage V.1	VHS-Dub	$14.98
Dual - Student Housing V.2	DVD	$29.98
Dual - Student Housing V.2	VHS-Dub	$24.98
Dual - Student Housing V.2	VHS-Sub	$24.98
Fushigi Yugi - Seiryu Box DVD Box II)		$198.98
Fushigi Yugi OVA - Illusions V.1	VHS-Dub	$24.98
Fushigi Yugi OVA - Illusions V.1	VHS-Sub	$24.98
Hyper Doll	DVD	$14.98
Lain DVD Lunch Box Set		$119.98
Phantom Quest Corp	DVD	$14.98
Pokemon - Show Time! V.23	DVD	$24.98
Pokemon - Show Time! V.23	VHS-Dub	$14.98
Pokemon - Into the Arena V.24	DVD	$24.98
Pokemon - Into the Arena V.24	VHS-Dub	$14.98
Tenchi Universe - Time & Space Adventures V.4	DVD	$29.98
Trigun - Angel Arms V.5	DVD	$29.98
Trigun - Angel Arms V.5	VHS-Dub	$24.98
Trigun - Angel Arms V.5	VHS-Sub	$29.98
December 2000 Releases		
3x3 Eyes - DVD Collection	DVD	$59.98
Black Heaven - Space Truckin' V.2	DVD	$29.98
Black Heaven - Space Truckin' V.2	VHS-Dub	$24.98
Black Heaven - Space Truckin' V.2	VHS-Sub	$24.98
Fatal Fury OAV Collection	DVD	$29.98
Fushigi Yugi - Memories (OVA) V.2	VHS-Dub	$24.98
Fushigi Yugi - Memories (OVA) V.2	VHS-Sub	$24.98
Tenchi Muyo! - Trouble Hatches V.1	VHS-Dub	$14.98
Tenchi Universe - Space I V.5	DVD	$29.98

For More Information, Please Call 1.800.526.0363 or see our website at www.pioneeranimation.com

KINOKUNIYA BOOKSTORES · TOWER RECORDS · SUNCOAST MOTION PICTURE COMPANY WE KNOW MOVIES · Virgin MEGASTORE

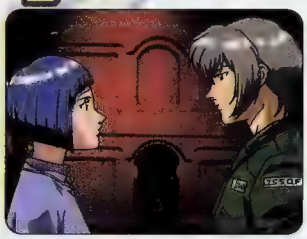
© Yu Watase/Shogakukan · TV Tokyo · Studio Pierrot
© 1996 Yu Watase/Shogakukan · Bandai Visual · Studio Pierrot · NOVIC
Licensed by Fuji Creative Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

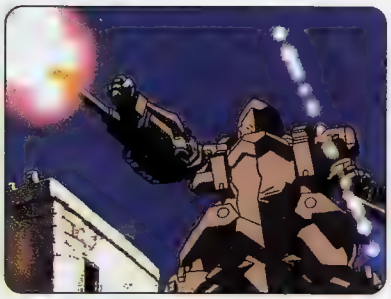
ガサラキ

GASARAKI VOL. 2

REVIEWED BY SHOLA AKINNUSO
•2000 ADV FILMS
75 MINUTES•ENGLISH DUBBED
★★★1/2 ACTION/SCI-FI

I think I'm starting to understand a bit of *Gasaraki*'s appeal. While my biggest concern with the first tape was the inaccessibility of the characters, I'm starting to appreciate, based on these next four (and significantly improved) installments, that the attachment isn't necessarily for the characters themselves, but for this politically dense world they inhabit. Full of gunfights, mysterious men in black, and shady world politics, the best way to view *Gasaraki* is like Tom Clancy fiction littered with healthy amounts of Japanese mysticism. Mysticism and, of course, giant mechs. *Gasaraki* is, in fact, the story of squabbling nations and their covert (and sometimes not so covert) attempts to secure the bipedal mobile suits that can upset the balance of world power. Reaching for a balance between the better parts of early Gundam and modern-day anime, *Gasaraki* is all about creating a mirror of our real world via attention to the engineering of the mobile suits, and the writers' observations of military protocol and government relations. There's an uneasy amount of tension watching our crew of soldiers (introduced in the last volume) kill enemies with a business-as-usual apathy in their mobile suits, and the maneuverings of government officials that keep the question jumping throughout the series of who is good, and who is evil? Friends who have watched the fansub of the series assure me that while the first few volumes are slow, *Gasaraki*, jumps to near *Evangelion*-level writing and intrigue. **GR**





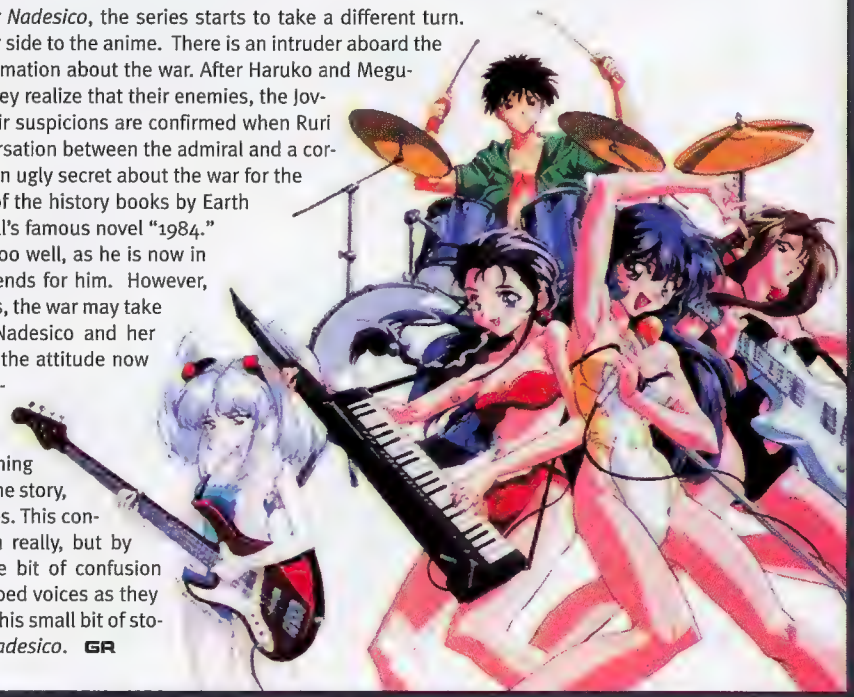
MARTIAN SUCCESSOR NADESICO VOL. 7

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•2000 ADV FILMS
60 MINUTES•ENGLISH DUBBED
★★★1/2 SCI-FI/ACTION

With the seventh tape of *Martian Successor Nadesico*, the series starts to take a different turn. While the humor remains, there is now a darker side to the anime. There is an intruder aboard the Nadesico, and the crew is faced with new information about the war. After Haruko and Megumi have been taken hostage by the intruder, they realize that their enemies, the Jovian Lizards, are not exactly aliens after all. Their suspicions are confirmed when Ruri allows the entire ship to eavesdrop on a conversation between the admiral and a corporate representative. Earth has been hiding an ugly secret about the war for the past 100 years. Something has been cut out of the history books by Earth government, much in the style of George Orwell's famous novel "1984."

Akito has taken to becoming a pilot a little too well, as he is now in the war to win it. The means now justify the ends for him. However, with this new discovery about the Jovian Lizards, the war may take an interesting and unexpected turn for the Nadesico and her crew. Akito's newfound bloodlust may not be the attitude now needed to continue the war. How are they supposed to keep fighting for Earth, now that they know what they know?

Nadesico remains one of the most entertaining series on store shelves. There is rarely a lull in the story, even if it does become a little confusing at times. This confusion is not caused by a lack of information really, but by badly storyboarded events. Unfortunately, the bit of confusion that is evident is made even worse by the dubbed voices as they make the action even harder to follow. Luckily, this small bit of storyline confusion is not nearly enough to ruin *Nadesico*. **GR**



Because millions of fans demanded it...

ReBoot
is now on VHS and DVD.
Just in time for the Holidays!

An original DEI production by Mainframe Entertainment, the series has been sold in over 65 countries worldwide. To date ReBoot® has received no less than 10 awards within North America and with the release of the series on VHS and DVD ReBoot® will continue to gain popularity among fans of all ages.

dub: $14.98
dvd: $24.98
IN STORES NOW!

Also available on VHS and DVD
from ADV Films and Mainframe Entertainment

Weird-Ohs™

dub: $12.98 IN STORES NOW!

ADV FILMS
www.advfilms.com • e-mail: sales@advfilms.com
ANIMATION FOR A NEW GENERATION

Babbage's America's Software Headquarters
BEST BUY
electronics EB boutique
SUNCOAST MOTION PICTURE COMPANY
HMV
amazon.com
hastings Your Entertainment Superstore

ReBoot™ is a registered trademark of Mainframe Entertainment, Inc. ©1997 ReBoot III Productions, Ltd. A Mainframe/Alliance Production All Rights Reserved.
Weird-Ohs™ is a registered trademark of The Testors Corporation. ©1999 Weird-Ohs Productions, Ltd. A Subsidiary of Mainframe Entertainment, Inc.
All Rights Reserved. A Mainframe/Decode Production. In Association with The Testors Corporation.

JUBEI-CHAN DVD VOL. 2

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•2000 BANDAI ENTERTAINMENT
75 MINUTES • BI-LINGUAL
★★★ ACTION/DRAMA

Did you laugh at *Haunted Junction*? Is the kind of humor that makes you look at the screen while your upper lip twitches, and seconds later you burst into laughter, right up your alley? Then *Jubei-chan* should be the next anime on your shopping list. Yes, *Jubei-chan*, where the humor is ridiculous, and several of the characters look like monkeys.

Juebei-chan is an 8th-grade girl who lives with her father. She was approached by a 300-year-old samurai and given a lovely eye patch. This eye patch contains the spirit of an ancient samurai lord, and endows Jubei with the power to open up a can of whoop-ass with a katana sword. Unfortunately this causes more problems than it solves. Now enemies of the samurai lord whose spirit she now possesses are challenging poor Jubei on a daily basis.

A husband and wife team of assassins takes Jubei's father hostage in an attempt to get the lovely eye patch from her. Jubei wants to be rid of the wretched eye patch anyway, and the fact that the woman who helped kidnap her father looks uncannily like Jubei's dead mother does not help things at all. To make everything worse, she now has to face a challenge from Shiro, the boy at school who likes her. And for the ultimate humiliation, Jubei is forced to wear a metal mask on her face that blinds her left eye, so that she will learn to fight better with the eye patch covering her left eye. Unfortunately, the metal mask looks like a pink toilet, and poor Jubei is dubbed Urinal Queen by her schoolmates.

Jubei-chan is mostly comprised of non-sequitur and slapstick types of humor. However, the animation is surprisingly good, especially the fight scenes. If you are a fan of the disturbingly odd, then check out *Jubei-chan*.

GR

SILENT MOBIUS VOL. 6

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINA ALEXANDER
•ANIME VILLAGE
150 MINUTES • ENGLISH SUBBED
★★★★★ SCI-FI/ ADVENTURE

Very few series have had the ability to hook their claws into me like *Silent Mobius*. The strange thing is that this series gets very little recognition. In reality, this is one of the best series I have seen in quite some time. Beside juggernauts like *Cowboy Bebop*, *Blue Sub 6*, and *Trigun*, *Silent Mobius* tends to get overlooked. However, this anime can easily stand with any of its more recognized companions.

This sixth tape is massive. It contains six episodes, and is so heavy you can beat someone senseless with it. So getting your money's worth is not an issue here. Each episode tells the story of AMP with storybook precision. Each chapter pertains to individual characters and really takes the time to dig deep into their minds. AMP gets a new member in the form of a young Chinese girl called Lum Cheng. She is cocky, rude, standoffish, and extremely talented. The rest of the team mostly feels she is a pain in the ass. Kiddy has another run in with the Megadynes, which draws her closer to Ralph (her sometimes boyfriend), while Yuki discovers a secret about her coffee shop that takes her back to the 1990s.

Katsumi Liqueur's destiny draws closer as the Lucifer Hawks are ready to begin the end game. Katsumi faces her love for Robert Device, and the fear that comes with the territory. She realizes that by keeping Robert as her lover, she makes him a target for the Lucifer Hawks, as they try to convince her to come to Nemesis willingly. If something happens to Robert, what will stop Katsumi's hate from turning her into humanity's greatest enemy?

The stories contained in *Silent Mobius* are incredibly well written. No character is extraneous, and all words and actions are important to the main plot. *Silent Mobius* is what all anime series should strive to be, and is a must-have for any fan's collection. GR

GAMERS' REPUBLIC EDITORS' TOP 5

D. Halverson	S. Akinnuso	C. Alexander
1. Spriggan **ADV**	1. Cowboy Bebop **Bandai**	1. Silent Mobius **Bandai**
2. Sin **ADV**	2. Blue Submarine **Bandai**	2. Samurai-X **ADV**
3. A.N. Nanako **Pioneer**	3. Samurai-X **ADV**	3. Princess Mononoke **Miramax**
4. Gasaraki **ADV**	4. Escaflowne **Bandai**	4. Generator Gawl **ADV**
5. Outlaw Star **Bandai**	5. Gasaraki **ADV**	5. Trigun **Pioneer**

anime top 5

urban vision and gamers' republic

READERS' TOP 5

1. Cowboy Bebop **Bandai**
2. Gasaraki **ADV Films**
3. Outlaw Star **Bandai**
4. Amazing Nurse Nanako **Pioneer**
5. Samurai-X **ADV Films**

TOP 5 ANIME CONTEST

GRAND PRIZE:

A DVD Player and the Vampire Hunter D DVD!

2nd PRIZE:

Vampire Hunter D DVD, a Vampire Hunter D poster, and the Vampire Hunter D video game!

3rd PRIZE:

Vampire Hunter D DVD

All winners also receive a 1-year subscription to Gamers' Republic!

To enter send your top 5 anime picks on whatever parchment you choose to:

Gamers Republic Anime Contest
32123 Lindero Cyn. Rd.
Thousand Oaks Ca. 91361
or enter online at:
dhalverson@gamersrepublic.com

gamers' republic

To enter the Urban Vision/Gamers' Republic Top Five Anime Contest, simply send us a list of your favorite five anime, new or old. Make sure to include your name, address and age and send it to: **Gamers' Republic Top Five Anime, 32123 Lindero Canyon Road, suite 218, Westlake Village, CA 91361**, or e-mail our venerable leader at **dhalverson@gamersrepublic.com**. First prize will receive: A DVD player, a copy of Vampire Hunter D DVD, and a 1-year subscription to Gamers' Republic. Second place will receive a copy of Vampire Hunter D DVD, a VHD poster, a copy of the Vampire Hunter D video game (pending on time release of the game) and a 1-year subscription to GR, and third place will receive a copy of the Vampire Hunter D DVD, and a 1-year subscription. Good Luck everyone!

Gamers' Republic would like to thank Urban [illegible]
No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited.

JOJO'S

Based on the manga and the not-so-popular Capcom video game, Kotobukiya's first wave of action sets based on JoJo's Bizarre Adventure—a strange yet captivating 2D fighting bonanza—are available right now. Each set features one of the famous fighters along with his/her "stand" psychic partner, and accessories like spare limbs and squid arms! That's actually one of the fighters, not JoJo's pooch, down there about to get filleted. Check out artfx-kotobukiya.com or banzaianime.com for prices and availability.

HOUSE OF THE DEBD

Sega's manic zombie-riddled Dreamcast gun game has spawned some juicy pieces to be sure. These lovely chaps yanked from their coffins and keeps are finally at retail and I suggest you put the moves on 'em fast, as they are sure to disappear rather quickly and they make the perfect stocking stuffer. There's nothing like a chainsaw-wielding undead murderous freak on Christmas morning, I always say. Look for them wherever fine action figures are sold.

BERSERK

LAIN LUNCHBOXES

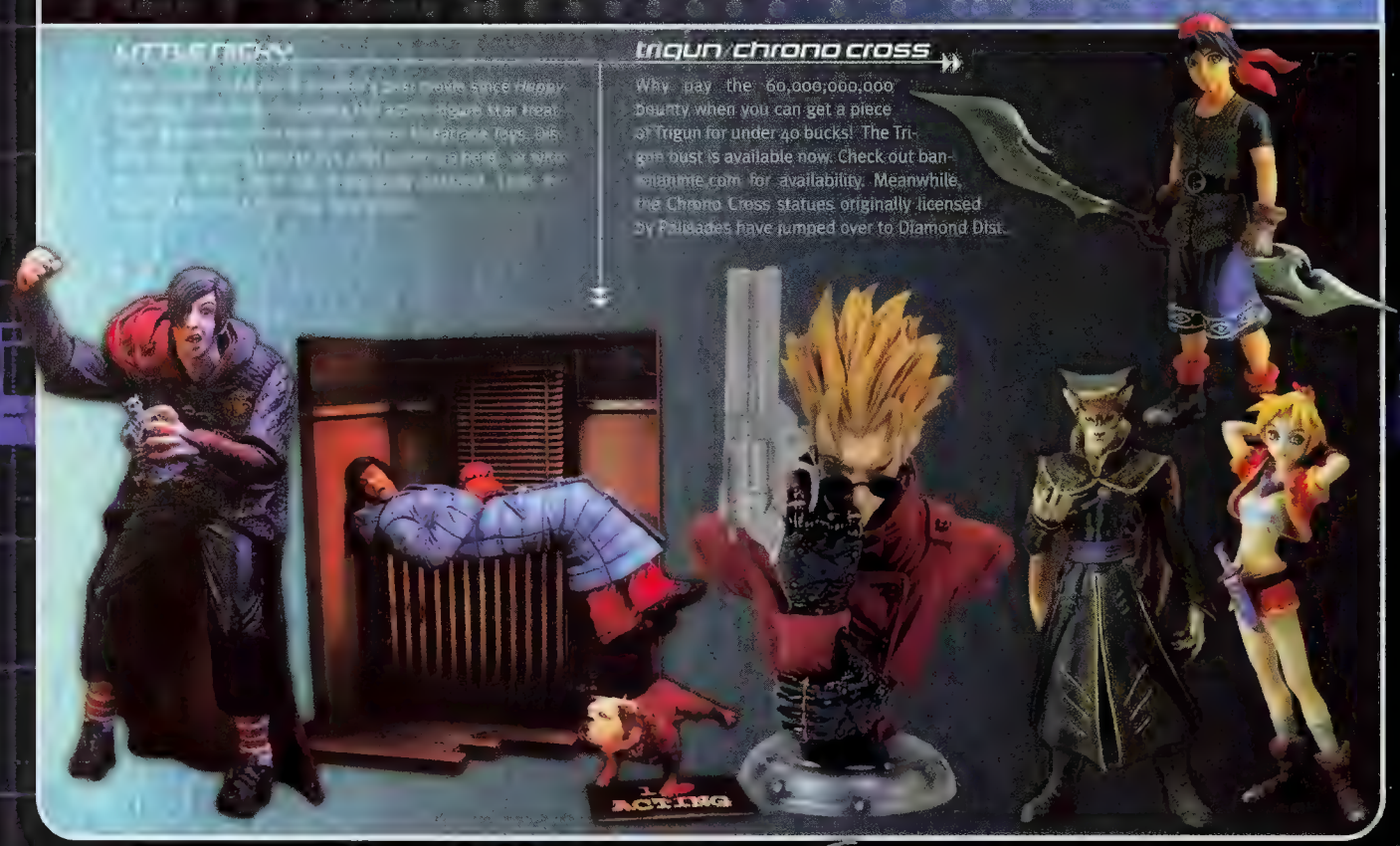
© 2000 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.
THE LEGEND OF DRAGOON
© 2000 Crystal Dynamics & Eidos. All Rights Reserved.
Raziel
LEGACY of KAIN
SOUL REAVER 2
Kain
bbi 7" COLLECTOR FIGURES
FULLY ARTICULATED
HIGH DETAIL DIORAMA & ACCESSORIES (FOR SOUL REAVER SERIES)
TRUE CHARACTER REPRESENTATION
FOR INFO ON MORE RELEASES COMING SOON, VISIT OUR WEBSITE
AT http://www.blueboxtoys.com AND JOIN US AS OUR MEMBER
838 TOY CENTRE, 200 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10010, U.S.A.
TEL:(212)2558388 FAX:(212)2558520
http://www.blueboxtoys.com

curious?
GR
GR: 2000
WWW.GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM
GAMES?
WWW.GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM
HAVE ANY IDEA?
GO: WWW.GAMERSREPUBLIC.COM
PLAYSTATION, DREAMCAST, PLAYSTATION 2, GAME BOY, NINTENDO 64,
X-BOX, NINTENDO GAMECUBE, GAME BOY ADVANCE...
ELETRONIC ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY
MILLENNIUM PUBLICATIONS
CUSTOMIZE

MCFARLENE . PALISADES . KOTOBUKIYA

trigun chrono cross

Why pay the 60,000,000,000 bounty when you can get a piece of Trigun for under 40 bucks! The Trigun bust is available now. Check out banjammie.com for availability. Meanwhile, the Chrono Cross statues originally licensed by Palisades have jumped over to Diamond Dist.



SPACE CHANNEL 5

...ed Space Channel 5 mini ... Markan's judging by these ... the royal treatment. Look ...

FINAL FANTASY VIII

Kotobukiya have outdone themselves with these new FFVIII resin statues featuring Diablo with Zell and Irvine, and Leviathon with Quistis and Selphie. Diamond Distributors is doing the honors, so duck into your local comic shop or comb the usual spots on the web (actionace/fandom) for availability.

TRIGUN and related marks are © 1998 Yasuhiro Nightow/ICHONEN GAHO-SHA, Tokuma Shoten, JVC
PALISADES LOGO AND 2000 PALISADES MARKETING, LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME:
AN INTERVIEW WITH Mr. TOUJI TANAKA AND RYOICHI ITOH

IN ADDITION TO THIS MONTH'S BOUNTY OF NEW TOYS, HERE'S SOME INSIGHT INTO HOW INCREDIBLE FIGURES LIKE ARMORED CORE NO. 1 & 2 BEGIN THE PROCESS. TWO TALENTED SCULPTORS CARVED THESE METAL BEAUTIES: NO. 1 IS BY MR. RYOICHI ITOH, AND NO. 2 IS BY MR. TOUJI TANAKA. HERE'S WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY IN A RECENT INTERVIEW WITH GR.

GR: TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELVES. WHAT'S YOUR BACKGROUND?

RI: I came to Tokyo from the country to become an animator, but became a sculptor instead. I started to display garage kit buildups to earn some extra money in a model magazine (Model Graphix), but couldn't make a living and so returned to a salaried job last year. Basically, I'm just one of those otakus!

TT: I was a college student then went on to become a sculptor for garage kits. I haven't done anything else.

GR: DO YOU PLAY VIDEO GAMES? DID YOU PLAY ARMORED CORE BEFORE BEGINNING YOUR SCULPTURE?

RI: I do like video games, but I tend to concentrate on one software title at a time. I am mostly a Sony PS2 fan. I knew about Armored Core, but Armored Core was the first title I played in the series. After completing the sculpt, I got into it and bought the game together with the PS2 console.

TT: I play lots of video games. I have all sorts of hardware.

GR: LOOKING AT THIS SCULPTURE, I AM AMAZED AT THE DETAIL AND QUALITY OF THE PRODUCT. DO YOU HAVE A SAY IN THE OVERALL PRESENTATION OF THE PRODUCT?

RI: I'm sure I don't have any say over the specifications of a product. However, I try to work in a comfortable environment, so I try to say whatever I want to say. The manufacturers seem to be trying hard to accommodate my [illegible] for it (right Tsumura-san? (Tsumura-san is in Kotobukiya's production department and deals directly with the sculptors.)

TT: I don't really have an overall say. Our job is to sculpt all the different parts that can be used from the reference materials.

GR: HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS LINE OF WORK?

RI: I was making garage kit buildups for the magazine Model Graphix and met [illegible] from Kotobukiya (who is my contact from the Product Development Department), and it was really his introduction.

TT: I was introduced into this field by a classmate from university (Tsumura-[illegible]) and it's very fun for me as a sculptor.

GR: SO YOU BEGIN WITH A LUMP OF CLAY I SUPPOSE. IS THE INITIAL SCULPTURE ONE PIECE OR ARE THERE SEVERAL SEPARATE SECTIONS?

RI: [illegible] I consider the process involved in the particular product and how it is to be built up, then divide up the product into different blocks. This particular [illegible] was difficult because it had so many different blocks.

TT: I use polyester putty. I vary the number of pieces depending on how many articulating points there are and what the design of the product is.

GR: DO YOU HAVE TO DESIGN A CERTAIN WAY BECAUSE OF THE MOLDING PROCESS?

RI: In one sense, that is an obvious consideration for all sculptors. The reason for that is because if we make a sculpt and the factory is unable to make a mold from it, then all of our work was for nothing. So when I'm asked to make revisions during the approval process after the sculpt has been completed, it's a huge disappointment.

TT: This was the first time I worked on an action figure, so I was asked to make revisions twice. It was hard work.

GR: HOW MUCH DOES A MODELS' ARTICULATION FIGURE IN TO YOUR DESIGN?

RI: We do consider the extent of articulation when we are designing and arranging our initial sculpt. The reality is, however, that with an action figure, we're fairly restricted in the joints, and so it becomes muted. In this instance, though, the manufacturer tried very hard and created ball joints out of the neck and waist. Good job!

TT: In the case of mecha, they have to be able to move, and so that's how I made it.

GR: FROM WHERE DID YOU DRAW YOUR INSPIRATION FOR ARMORED CORE 2? THE GAME, ART OR BOTH?

RI: As this was the first time that I had experienced the world of Armored Core more or less, I didn't really draw inspiration from anything in particular. Having said that, my objective was to realize all the details in the art.

TT: I drew my inspiration from the main robot in the original Armored Core, as well as the sketches by Mr. Kawamori (the character designer).

GR: HOW LONG DOES A SCULPT OF THIS QUALITY TAKE?

RI: A little over a month for something like this.

TT: About a month for the initial sculpt, but with the tooling revisions, it took two months.

GR: DO YOU PREFER MECH DESIGN OR MORE ORGANIC MATERIAL?

RI: I prefer more blocky designs as opposed to organic material. However, I would like to try my hand at all sorts of different things.

TT: I do prefer mecha designs. I'm not too good with creatures.

GR: WHO DO YOU FEEL, BESIDES YOURSELF, IS DOING THE BEST WORK OUT THERE TODAY?

RI: Yoshiyuki Aihara (a writer/reviewer for Model Graphix, and my competitor!), Hajime Takashima (who works for another manufacturer, called Studio Half Eye), and Touji Tanaka.

TT: For mecha design, Yoshiyuki Aihara and Masaki Ishii (a writer/reviewer for the model magazine, Hobby Japan), for figures, it would be Ryujin-san, and for creatures, it would be Takayuki Takeya.

GR: WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER DESIGNS AND FIGURES?

RI: I don't really have any favorites right now. I'm able to do character designs and figures myself, so I tend to make my own based on my favorites.

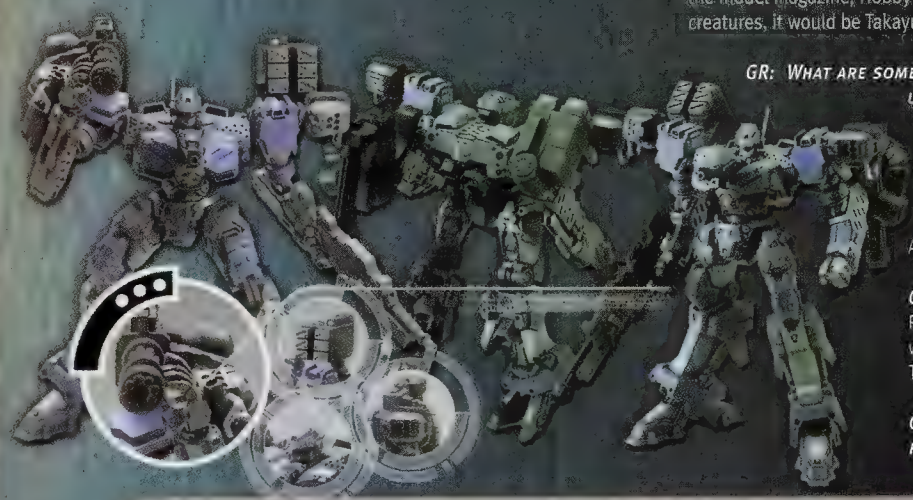
TT: Masamune Shirow, Renji Murata and Kia Asamiya.

GR: WHAT IS YOUR NEXT PROJECT?

RI: Another Armored Core 2 figure! Please look forward to it!

TT: More mecha...probably forever.

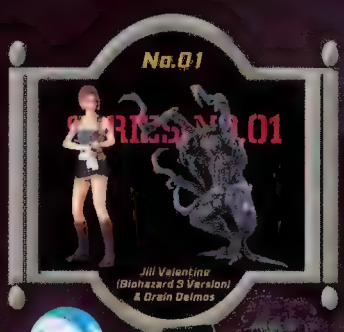
GR: THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR TIME! WE LOOK FORWARD TO DISPLAYING YOUR FINE WORKS!

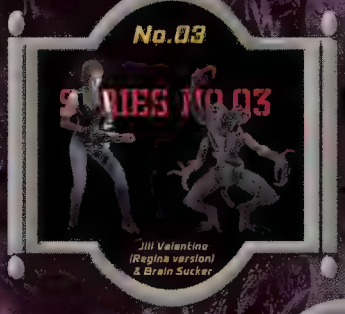


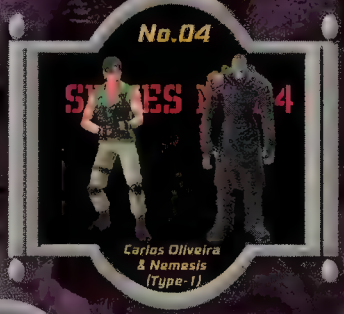
THE ULTIMATE BATTLE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN...

RESIDENT EVIL 3 NEMESIS

REAL SHOCK ACTION FIGURE
Now Available







MOBY DICK TOYS

©2000 Capcom

BERSERK
ベルセルク

Cold Cast Statues

ART OF WAR

©2000 Art of War

DARK HORSE COMICS

Check out Masamune Shirow's Ghost in the Shell graphic novel from Dark Horse Comics.
352 incredible b&w and color pages, only $24.95!
Available at bookstores and comics store everywhere.
To order direct, call
800-862-0052 or visit www.tfaw.com

SUNCOAST
Where You Buy Movies

Available at Select Suncoast Stores and Other Fine Retailers

1-888-COMIC-BOOK

TOYCOM

From Japan To You

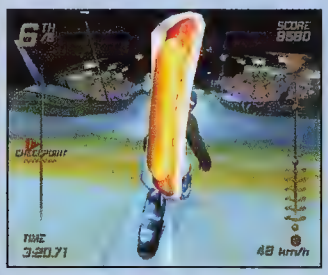
Tel: (818) 901-2133

Fax: (818) 901-2134

PS2 SSX

OPEN ALL COURSE HINTS
Hold L1 + L2 +R1 + R2 and press Circle, X, Circle, X, Circle, X, Circle, X. To undo the code, repeat the process.

RUNNING MAN MODE
At the Options screen, hold L1 + L2 +R1 + R2 and press Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, Triangle, Circle, X. To undo the code, repeat the process.



PS2 MADDEN NFL 2001

TOUCHDOWN CELEBRATION
After scoring a touchdown, enter one of the following:
Slam Dunk: L1 + R2
Give Thanks: L1 + Triangle
Do a Hip Thrust: L1 + Square
Do a Shoulder Shake: L1 + R1
Spike the Ball: L1 + X
Do a Jump Spike: L1 + X

PS TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

UNLIMITED SPECIALS
To receive unlimited specials, pause the game and hold L1 and press X, Triangle, Circle, Circle, Up, Left, Triangle, Square. If performed correctly, the screen will shake.

TURBO MODE
To unlock turbo mode, pause the game and hold L1 and press Down, Square, Triangle, Right, Up, Circle, Down, Square, Triangle, Right, Up, Circle. If performed correctly, the screen will shake.

MAXIMUM STATISTICS
To max out your stats, pause the game and hold L1 and press X, Triangle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Up, Down. If performed correctly, the screen will shake.

TURN BLOOD ON AND OFF
To turn the blood on and off, pause the game and hold L1 and press Right, Up, Square, Triangle. If performed correctly, the screen will shake.

BIG HEAD MODE
To unlock big head mode, pause the game and hold L1 and press Square, Circle, Up, Left, Left, Square, Right, Up, Left. If performed correctly, the screen will shake.

LOUIE ANDERSON MODE
To make your player fat, pause the game and hold L1 and press X, X, X, X, Left, X, X, X, X, Left, X, X, X, X, Left. If performed correctly, the screen will shake. You can do this multiple times.

KATE MOSS MODE
To make your player skinny, pause the game and hold L1 and press X, X, X, X, Square, X, X, X, X, Square, X, X, X, X, Square. If performed correctly, the screen will shake. You can do this multiple times.

SUPER CODE
To unlock all the cheats, FMVs, extra skaters and extra levels, pause the game and hold L1 and press X, X, X, Square, Triangle, Up, Down, Left, Up, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, Circle, X, Triangle, Circle. If performed correctly, the screen will shake. Then choose End Run.

SAN FRANCISCO RUSH 2049

UNLOCK CHEATS MENU
To unlock the option for the cheat menu, highlight Options at the Main menu, then hold L trigger + R trigger + X and press Right on the crosspad. If performed correctly, an option for the Cheat Menu will appear at the bottom of the screen. The Cheat Menu needs to be opened to use the following codes.

UNLOCK ALL CARS
Highlight All Cars in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly press A, A, Y, Y, L Trigger, L Trigger, hold R trigger + X then release and hold L trigger + A.

RANDOM WEAPONS
Highlight Random Weapons in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + A and press X, Y, then release and hold R trigger + A and press X, Y.

DEMOLITION BATTLE
Highlight Demolition Battle in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + A and press Y, X, then release the buttons and hold R trigger + A, then press Y, X.

INVINCIBILITY
Highlight Invincible in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + X and press Y, A, then release and hold R trigger + A + X + Y.

SUPER TIRES
Highlight Super Tires in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold R trigger and press X, X, X, then release and hold L trigger and press A, A, Y.

BRAKES
Highlight Brakes in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly press Y, Y, Y, then hold L trigger + R trigger + A + X.

INVISIBLE CAR
Highlight Invisible Car in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + X, then release and hold R trigger + Y, then release and press A, then hold L trigger + R trigger and press X, then release the buttons and press Y, Y, Y.

INVISIBLE TRACK
Highlight Invisible Track in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly press R Trigger, L Trigger, Y, X, A, A, X, Y, then hold L trigger + R trigger and press A.

TRACK ORIENTATION
Highlight Track Orientation in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + R trigger and press X, then release the buttons and press A, X, Y, then hold L trigger + R trigger and press X.

SUPER SPEED
Highlight the Super Speed option in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold Y + R trigger and press Left, then release and hold A + X, then release the buttons and press A, A, A.

BATTLE PAINT SHOP
Highlight Battle Paint Shop in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold Y and press R Trigger, L Trigger, R Trigger, L Trigger, then release the buttons and press X, X, X.

FOG COLOR
Highlight Fog Color in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold L trigger + X, then release the buttons and hold A + X, then release and hold Y + X, then release the buttons and hold R trigger + X.

HEAVY CAR
Highlight Mass in the Cheat Menu. Then quickly hold A and press X, X, Y, then release the button and press Left, Right.

order@gexpress.com
212.290.0031

www.gexpress.com

- Playstation 2 Import
- Playstation
- Dreamcast
- Nintendo 64
- Gameboy Color
- NeoGeo Pocket Color
- 3Do
- Genesis
- GameGear
- Super Nintendo
- Virtual Boy
- Imports
- CDs
- DVDs
- Toys
- Posters
- Scrolls
- Art/Guide Books
- Japan Animations

info@gexpress.com order@gexpress.com
126 West 32 Street, New York, NY 10001
Fax: 212.290.0432 Phone Order: 212.290.0031

REBOOT: SEASON III VOL 1-4 REVIEW

ADV FILMS (www.advfilms.com)
VHS • 400 MIN
ALL AGES
REVIEWED BY SHOLA AKINNUSO

ADV gets respect for their move to distribute the final season of *Reboot*, arguably one of the most underrated and sophisticated animated shows of the '90s. The critically acclaimed series originally enjoyed a long run on ABC until they canned it just before the final season; ADV gets cool points for excavating these episodes.

Reboot is considered one of the earliest CGI shows to change the face of modern animation. Shedding traditional hand-drawn cell art for three-dimensional models, *Reboot* managed to carve a niche with some of the wittiest, most adult, pop-culture commentary that American audiences are likely to see. Set wholly in the world of a computer mainframe (the cast consists of personified computer references), the show took jabs at everything from societal trends to our gaming fads—and stayed sharp about it in the process. At its heart, though, *Reboot* was teenage drama—a more traditional spin on good and evil, old-fashioned romance and high adventure, as the dashing Bob and his motley crew faced off weekly against the evil Megabyte and villainous Hexidecimal. While there was always a bit of levity in the series, the show's propulsion was always the inherent threat of war—and something more sinister than what most American shows would allow during children's television.

Since its cancellation (and subsequent Canadian pick-up), the show's grown considerably darker. With half the cast either missing or changed to fit the moodier themes, the final season of *Reboot* has become fantastic, peculiar, dark fantasy. Old characters, like child heroes Enzo and Andrea, are people changed and notably world weary. Taking a dramatic time jump (in order to emphasize the more apocalyptic status quo), *Reboot* does all the elements right, and it's all exceptionally well-written.

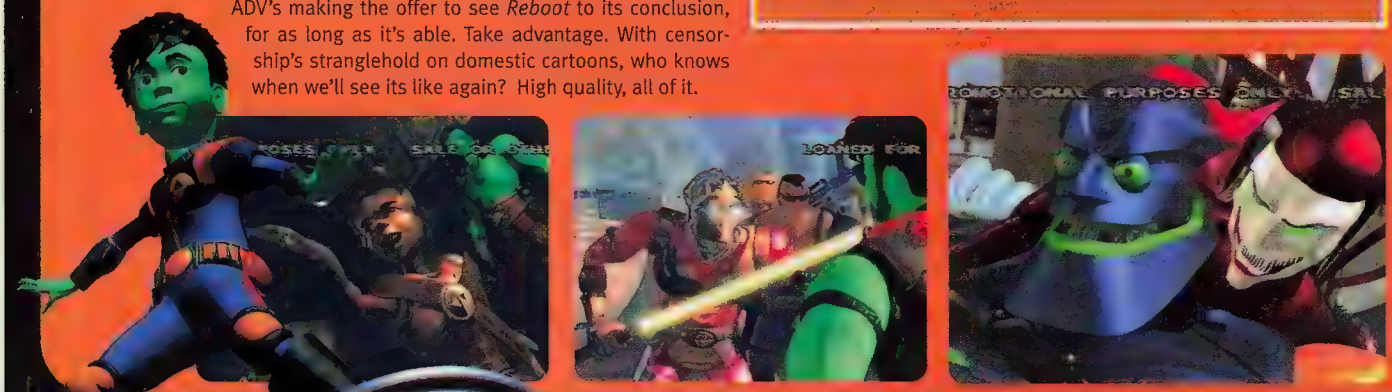
Fans of old will absolutely love this final viewing of a drama that was far too short-lived, and far too intelligent than the audience it was aiming for. There are few things, even in Japanese anime, that are as satisfying as watching the characters of this animation classic make sense of the world around them, their changes, and ultimately their conflicts. ADV's making the offer to see *Reboot* to its conclusion, for as long as it's able. Take advantage. With censorship's stranglehold on domestic cartoons, who knows when we'll see its like again? High quality, all of it.

THE CUTTING ROOM FLOOR

you can relive those traumatic moments from your childhood as Optimus Prime and Megatron battle to the death. Coming courtesy of Rhino Video, this Collector's Edition of what is arguably the best-looking American-produced animation ever is scheduled to contain the full, uncut version of the movie, storyboards, animated chapter breaks, and an interview with the movie's composer, Vince DiCola (also of *Rocky IV* fame). Starring the voice talents of Leonard Nimoy, Robert Stack, Judd Nelson, Eric Idle and Orson Welles, TFTM on DVD is required viewing for anyone who spent their days in the '80s wanting to transform and roll out.

Details are beginning to trickle out of Hollywood concerning Quentin Tarantino's next project, his first since his under-appreciated 1997 effort, *Jackie Brown*. Reportedly still in the script-writing stage, the intriguingly titled *Kill Bill* will see Tarantino reuniting with his *Pulp Fiction* co-star, the steamy Uma Thurman. Unlike Jackie Brown, Kill Bill is an original script, not an adaptation, and shooting is scheduled to begin this spring, meaning that the film should be complete before the Screen Actors Guild strike occurs, if it occurs at all.

It has been reported that Patrick Stewart has officially signed on for *Star Trek X*. Thus far, he is the only cast member of the Next Generation posse to do so, though it is expected that most will follow suit. Story details are currently nonexistent, but John Logan, co-screenwriter of *Any Given Sunday* and *Gladiator*, has been tapped to write and possibly helm the next feature. As for the film's prospects, it is an even numbered Trek (for those who believe in the odd number curse), but John Logan was also responsible for 1999's *Bats* with Lou Diamond Phillips. *Star Trek X* is currently scheduled for a Summer 2002 release.



JAPAN VIDEO GAMES

YOUR #1 SOURCE OF AMERICAN AND JAPANESE VIDEO GAMES

Dreamcast

DREAMCAST MOD. CHIP AVAILABLE NOW!! PLEASE CALL FOR DETAIL

QODZILLA GENERATION $19

GIANT GRAM $59

IMPORT
GUILTY GEAR X (LIMITED)
LAST BLADE 2
GUNE SPIKE
EL DORADO GATE 2nd EDIT
JUSTIC GAKUEN (RIVAL SCHOOL)
CHARGE N BLAST
F 1 WORLD GRAND PRIX II
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE (LIMITED EDIT)
DAYTONA USA 2001
CARD CAPTOR SAKURA
SEGA TETRIX
SAMBA DE AMIGO VER 2K
SONIC SHUTTLE
MARS MATRIX
BIO HAZARD 3 LAST ESCAPE
QUIZ OH! MY GODDESS

DANCE DANCE REV. 2ND MIX $55

GUNDAM GIREN S GREED $55

MR. DRILLER $19

All JPN WRE 4 $29

US
JET GRIND
SHENMUE
CAPCOM VS SNK 2000
SKIES OF ARCADIA
SONIC SHUFFLE
UNREAL TOURNAMENT
NBA 2K1
HALF LIFE
TONY HAWK PRO SKATER
PROJECT JUSTICE
RESIDENT EVIL 2
PRINCE OF PERSIA
VANISHING POINT
TOMB RAIDER 5
EVIL DEAD

SAKURA WAR 2 $45

DANCE DANCE REV. CLUB VER. $55

SAMBA DE AMIGO $49

BUGGY HEAT $10

PlayStation

PLEASE CALL FOR ANY TITLES NOT LISTED ABOVE
NOW YOU CAN PLAY ANY IMPORT PSX GAMES ON U.S. PSX SYSTEM W/ PSX CONVERTER $19/WITH ANY GAME PURCHASE

DBZ GT $39

BEATMANIA BEST HITS $39

IMPORT
METAL SLUG X
BOMBERMAN LAND
DRAGON QUEST 7
SD GUNDAM G GEN.
CHRONO TRIGGER
MACROSS PLUS
SUPER ROBOT WAR ALPHA
GUNDAM GIREN S'GREED
SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO
KAMEN RIDER V3

DBZ LEGEND $39

DANCE DANCE REV. 2nd $59

DBZ U.B. 22 $39

DANCE DANCE REV $59

FATAL FURY WILD AMB. $29

DANCE DANCE REV. 3rd $59

POCKET STATION $39

PSX VCD ADAPTER $39

US
007 RACING
WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH
DRIVER 2
MOTO RACER 3
BLADE
EMPERORS NEW GROOVE
FINAL FANTASY 9
BREATH OF FIRE 4
WCW 2001
CRASH BASH
TOMB RAIDER 5
SHAO LIN
R2R BOXING 2
MATT HOFFMAN PRO BMX

IMPORT PLAYSTATION 2

PRO BASEBALL $65

LIVE WORLDWIDE SOCCER $39

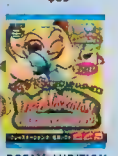
G SAVIOUR $75

X FIRE $65

EX BILLIARD $39

AMERICAN ARCADE $39

TVDJ $29


DREAM AUDITION EDIT $79

DRIVING EMOTION T/S $39

STEPPING SELECTION $39

ETERNAL RING $29

IMPORT PLAYSTATION 2
GUITAR FREAKS 3rd MIX
GREATEST STRIKER
BLOOD OF THE LAST EMPIRE
TOP GEAR DEAD DEVIL
BOUNCER
DREAM AUDITION 2
CRAZY BUMPS CAR BATTLE
KENGOU
DEAD OR ALIVE 2 HARD CORE
MOBLE SUIT GUNDAM

US
NHL 2001
KESSEN
MOTO GP
SKY ODYSSEY
X SQUAD
UNREAL TOURNMENT
SILENT SCOPE
DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
FIFA 2001
NFL GAME DAY 2001
STAR WARS EPISODE 1
SPY HUNTER
NASCAR 2001
ARMY MEN
TOP GUN
SSX SNOWBOARD
SUPERCROSS
DOA2: HARDCORE
SMUGGLER'S RUN

Music CD Monthly Special

DANCE DANCE REV. 2ND (2CD) $25

FINAL FANTASY 7 (4 CD's) $39

D.B. Z $12

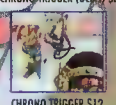
CHRONO CROSS (3CD) $35

CHRONO TRIGGER (3CD's) $35

FINAL FANTASY 8 (4 CD's) $39

S F 3RD STRIKE (2 CD) $25

TEKKEN TAG $12


CHRONO TRIGGER $12

FINAL FANTASY 9 (4 CD's) $39

KOF 2000 (2CD's) $12

ZELDA 64 (2CD's) $ 25

GUNDAM Wing (1-4) $12/ea.

DANCE DANCE REV. 2ND (2CD) $25

DRACULA X $12

SAMBA DE AMIGO $ 12

IMPORT WONDER SWAN

SD GUNDAM GACHAPON TAO
KHONOJI NO TAMAGO
EVANGELION
CRAZY CLIMBER
MSV3 MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM
ROCKMAN X FORTE
CARD CAPTOR SAKURA
DIGIMON ADVENTURE
MACROSS DON'T REMEMBER LOVE
GENERISS OF MILLENNIUM
GHOST OF GHOST
SUPER ROBOT BIG WAR COMP 2
POCKET FIGHTER
MSV2 MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM
HUNTER X HUNTER

PLEASE CALL FOR ANYTITLES NOT LISTED ABOVE

NINTENDO64

NOW, YOU CAN PLAY ANY IMPORT N64 GAMES ON US N64 SYSTEM WITH ROM CONVERTER $15.99

VIRTUAL PRO WRESTLING 1 $19

CUSTOM ROBO $59

VIRTUAL PRO WRESTLING 2 $39

SUPER ROBOT BIG WAR $49

IMPOR
SIN & PUNISHMENT
CUSTOM ROBO 2
ROBOT PONKOTTSU
DORAEMON 3
FURAI-NO-SIREN 2

WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH
HEY YOU PIKACHU
MEGAMAN 64
SPIDERMAN
MICKEY S SPEED WAY
WWF: NO MERCY
BANJO-TOOIE
WCW 2001
R2R BOXING 2

ALL SHOWN PICTURES ARE IMPORT GAMES!!

SUPER FAMICOM

ROCKMAN & FORTE $39

SECRET OF MANA 3 $29

WORLD HERO $15

ROMANCING SAGA 3 $ 29

COMING SOON OF GUNDAM WING, GUNDAM MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM 2000'S KIT ETC. FOR PRICE

6" F.F. 8 ACTION FIGURE $10/ea
8" EVANGELION ACTION FIGURE $19/ea
3" DIGIMON ACTION FIGURE $5/ea
5" ROCKMAN X, 8, MODEL KIT $15/ea

Final Fantasy 8 Action Figures: $10ea/

NEOGEO POCKET

$69 System Only

NEOGEO POCKET
THE MATCH OF MILLENNIUM
SNK VERSION CARD CLASH
CAPCOM VERSION CARD CLASH
SAMURAI SHOWDOWN 2
METAL SLUG
MAGICAL DROP
PACMAN BUST A MOVE
BIO MOTOR UNITRON
SNK GAL FIGHTERS
NEO 21
EVOLUTION
COOL BOARDERS
METAL SLUG 2ND MISSION
LAST BLADE
OGRE BATTLE (JPN)
ROCKMAN BATTLE & FIGHTER (JPN)
DELTA WARP (JPN)
COOL COOL JAM (JPN)
KOF BATTLE DE PARADISE (JPN)
COTTON (JPN)

KING OF FIGHTER 2000 NEO-GEO CARTRIDGES AVAILABLE NOW!

WE ALSO CARRY NEO-GEO CARTRIDGES PLEASE CALL FOR DETAIL!

1/12 Scale Battle Collection Action Figures Volume 1-42 Price from $13 ea up

WE ALSO CARRY POSTERS, NOVELTIES, WALL SCROLLS, AND GAME MUSIC CDS

ORDER HOT LINE: 626-281-9282

www.japanvideogames.com

Dealer & Wholesalers Welcome!

710-1 W. Las Tunas, San Gabriel, CA 91776 • Fax: 626-458-6845

VISA MasterCard DISCOVER COD

• Thrustmaster Freestyler

Thrustmaster • www.thrustmaster.com • Retail: $69.99

Desirability:

For those baddest of the bad boarder junkies who just can't get enough satisfaction playing snowboarding games with a controller Thrustmaster has the next best thing - The Thrustmaster Freestyler Board. Throw this sucker down on the living room floor and watch mom have a cow! When she's done, power up your favorite snowboarding game for the PS or PS2 and get ready to re-learn all those moves you thought you were so good at all over again. The Thrustmaster takes a little getting used to but it definitely adds a new dimension to what is quickly becoming one of the most popular and crowded extreme sports genres. And their timing couldn't be better. SSX Snowboarding is likely only the beginning of the PS2 quiver of snowboarding games to come. Controlling the board is achieved through jumping and doing tricks with the tethered one-handed controller and steering with the board, so if you can't walk and chew gum at the same time forget about it. The rest of you have fun, and if you get the urge to try a little unsanctioned freestyle, beware, I snapped the plastic trucks on our test board with one innocent kick flip and epoxy is not included. Peripherals are not meant for manual air. At $69.99 the Freestyler is bound to be one of the hottest peripherals this Christmas. It comes in a big box so it'll look like you spent a ton!

-D.HALVERSON

• Nascar Shock 2

Thrustmaster•www.thrustmaster.com•Retail: $39.99

Desirability:

Look past the tacky NASCAR decals on Thrustmaster's latest PS wheel, and you'll find a decent, fairly well-made peripheral. Complete with analog foot and hand pedals, NegCon simulation mode, and two vibration motors, the NASCAR Shock 2 has just about everything you could ask for. The unit's sculpted base allows it to be grasped between your knees (no snickering please), though for greater comfort, suction cups are also on hand for attatchment to any smooth surface. The wheel itself is stiffly sprung, helping to combat the over-correction that usually takes place when using a wheel, though this has the side effect of making its use tiring after a time. The same goes for using the pedals, which you'll quickly abandon as they slide all over the place. **-M.HOBBS**

GR GEAR

• Ridge Racer 2001 Type R

Namco • www.namco.co.jp • Retail: approx. $280

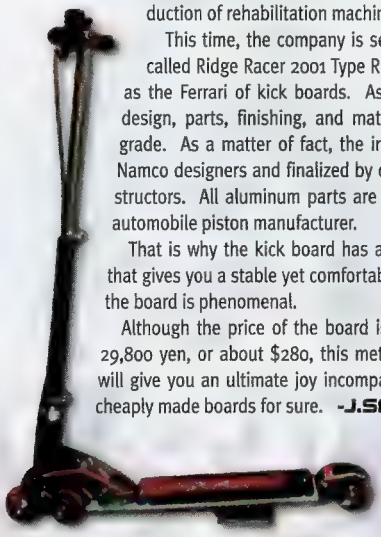
Desirability:

Namco, one of the most renowned game developers, has been engaging in not only the creation of fantastic games, but also environmentally friendly recycling projects and the production of rehabilitation machines for the elderly.

This time, the company is set to release a kick board called Ridge Racer 2001 Type R, and it could be regarded as the Ferrari of kick boards. As the company claims, its design, parts, finishing, and materials are of the highest grade. As a matter of fact, the initial design was done by Namco designers and finalized by domestic formula car constructors. All aluminum parts are cut and processed by an automobile piston manufacturer.

That is why the kick board has a dual front wheel system that gives you a stable yet comfortable ride, and the rigidity of the board is phenomenal.

Although the price of the board is somewhat expensive at 29,800 yen, or about $280, this meticulously designed board will give you an ultimate joy incomparable to riding any other cheaply made boards for sure. **-J.SAKAI**



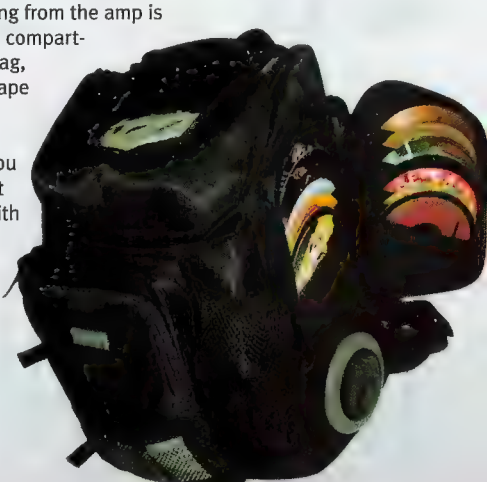
• Metatron Model 2100 "G-Bag"

Osiris • www.osirisgbag.com • Retail: $199

Desirability:

Here is an invention so simple, it is amazing that it took this long for it to happen. Skate product manufacturer Osiris has outfitted the perfect backpack for all you urban nomads. Dubbed the G-Bag, this pimpin' piece of technology mixes a fully functional travel bag, with a 100 watt amplifier feeding dual speakers, found on each side of the bag. A line trailing from the amp is routed to a perfect sized storage compartment, nestled at the top of the bag, where you can secure your CD, tape or Mini Disk player. Put in your favorite tunes and you've got instant theme music wherever you travel. In fact, on top of the great storage space, the bag comes with a CD pouch and inflatable pillow! The bag is premium quality and the speakers pump out some serious rump shakin' sounds. Add the fact the bag will hold a skateboard and well... I'm sold.

-T.STRATTON



S-VIDEO

Many modern televisions have what is called an S-Video, S2, or Super VHS input in the back, and sometimes on the front as well. Technically a four-pin DIN connector, it is represented in image on the left. Unlike the commonly used composite video signal, S-Video keeps the brightness, or luminance signal, separate from the color signal, or chrominance. This has the effect of greatly improving color separation and virtually eliminating dot-crawl, an artifact evident in composite signals wherein a trail of dots can be seen running around high-contrast edges.

The difference between composite and S-Video is unequivocal, and you will notice a huge leap in overall image definition and color purity. Every game system from the SNES onward (barring the small SNES Jr.) supports S-Video output, though you must pony up for the cables, which generally run for no more than $20. If your television supports S-Video, this is a wholly worthwhile investment.

COMPONENT VIDEO

The PlayStation 2 is the first home console capable of outputting a component video signal (Gamecube and Xbox will follow suit), and for the time being, this is the ultimate in terms of mainstream consumer electronics video connections. Only the newest televisions support component video however, and at that, it is only found on mid- and upper-range sets, generally 27" and up. But for the uncompromising, component is the only way to go.

As shown in the middle left image, a component connection looks exactly like a typical stereo composite set of inputs, except that all three RCA connectors are used for the video signal.

Like S-Video, component uses an isolated signal for the brightness or luminance information, generally called Y. But where S-Video combines the color, or chrominance information, called C, into one signal, component uses two signals for the color information. Though technically not as accurate as a pure RGB signal, as component uses the difference between the color signals to re-create the color spectrum, this is as close as you can currently get on consumer gear. And while S-Video offers a larger leap from composite than component does from S-Video, the difference is apparent. Colors are incredibly well defined, and edge definition is more or less perfect.

As a tip for the lucky PS2 owners that will be using a component connection, make sure that you change the PS2's component video setting in the menu from RGB to Y, Pb, Pr. Also, don't be confused if your television's component inputs are labeled something other than Y, Pb, Pr. For some curious reason, some manufacturers label component as Y, Cb, Cr.

Above, we have the back of a well-equipped modern television, complete with S-Video on the left and the coveted component input on the right. Both are becoming common on 27" and larger televisions.

TECHFRONT

BY MIKE HOBBS

Alarming anecdotal evidence has alerted us to the fact that there are many gamers out there with little or no idea of the benefits of using something other than the stock composite cables that come with current game consoles. The yellow, red, and white RCA cables that carry the video signal and the left and right audio channels that most use to connect their PlayStations, Dreamcasts and PS2s to their televisions should be considered the absolute minimum. But there currently exists a far better way to connect your game system to your television (two ways for PS2 owners), provided of course that your monitor supports these inputs. One way is S-Video, and the other is the newer, more advanced component input. Technically savvy readers may find some of the above information remedial, and it has been discussed by us in the past, but we felt a refresher course was in order. Next month, we'll have an explanation of the PS2's audio capabilities and the various ways to enjoy multi-channel sound.

Taking a picture of a television screen is never ideal, but even under these circumstances, the differences between the three different connection methods is plainly visible. Image A represents a composite signal, and notice how the word Design is seriously compromised. In image B, the S-Video signal, notice the massive leap in color purity and definition. Finally, the component signal in C resolves every last bit of detail.

Smugglers Run

Jonathan Davis: I like this game a lot. It makes me feel like I'm in *Smokey and the Bandit*. It's a driving game, but you have objectives like picking up money and not getting caught by the cops. It's really cool. You drive anywhere you want and f*** up anything you want. I love that about video games! This is my favorite of any of the games I've played tonight. It's fun. Racing down a mountain while hearing sirens goin' off behind you while you're struggling not to get caught... I love that feeling in games—any type of adrenaline rush.

GR MUSIC

interview with KORN jonathan davis

Music and video games, or rather musicians and video games, are fairly synonymous. But while many are familiar with today's games, Jonathan Davis, the lead singer of Korn, has been playing video games for a long time. With roots in the old school, he approaches modern games looking for the same simplistic addiction, so the opportunity to get his opinion on the very latest gaming trends was both welcome and appreciated. We thought Davis might be able to offer an interesting perspective—quick impressions about the PS2 games ready for launch—and we were right. Here's part one of our game session.

Gamers' Republic: First of all, thanks for being down with doing this and please don't feel like you might have to sugarcoat anything. So what do you like most about video games?

JONATHAN DAVIS: Nah man, this is really cool. My forte in games is... I love games that make you think. The game I am addicted to right now is The Sims. I am so addicted to that game, man. [Laughs] It's starting to get bad. I'm starting to watch my family as if they were in The Sims game. [Laughs] I swear, man. When I go out in public and stuff, I just think, what if we're just one big ass Sims and someone up there is just. Because when playing The Sims game, I can just sit there and watch all these families I created and watch them live. It totally makes me think. I love that. That game is the shit; I love that game.

GR: That's probably the best feeling a game can give you. Making you think about it after you've put it away. When was your first experience with video games?

*JD: When I got my Atari and I started playing Pong. And there was a tank game with helicopters. Shit, what the f*** was that called? I think it was just called Tank. The very first f***n' video game with a tank. It may have been from Activision, but anyway, when that first came out I had it. The sports games back then that Activision made were cool too. And some game, where you were a bomber. Shit, I can't remember the name right now, but I remember what you had to do. Those were cool games. Of course, I liked Asteroids and Space Invaders too. Then I got a Commodore 64. I'm old-school, man. On my first computer I was f*** dumping files back when it was on cassette tapes. [Laughs]*

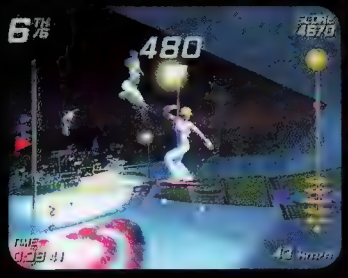
GR: Shit, man. I remember those days. You find yourself spending a lot of time in the arcades while growing up?

*JD: Yeah. One of my favorite arcade games was Dungeons & Dragons and also Dragon's Lair. That game is so cool. I am actually in the process of buying one. What's f***ed up about those machines is that it is actually like a juke box. You know those big video disks... laser disks? Well, inside it's just a bunch of video disks and for every move it switches to a different disk, swapping back and forth. The technology is really old and kinda screwy, so I'm still deciding whether to get one or not. But right now my favorite arcade game is Silent Scope 2. I'm really thinkin' about buying that one. That's the one I want. The only place I get out to are truck stops when I'm out on the road and all the truck stops have arcade machines. So I walk in there and see what they've got goin' on. That's where I found Silent Scope. Another game I saw that I really like is 18-wheeler. Its f***n' awesome. It's huge, but really cool. I'm building a game room inside my new house. It has a pool table and I'm thinking about a couple of arcade machines to go inside as well—Silent Scope and something else. I really like shooting games. Like Aerosmith's shooting game that came out a while back where you shot CDs at people. I love games, they're fun. They give me a chance not to think about shit that's going on in life. Sorta like alcohol, in a way. You just think in another way. Like that game, uh, Blazing Dragons! I played that game religiously. I played Pandemonium, I really liked D and got into Myst as well. But I had to use the book that game is for highly intellectual motherf****rs. And, there's that one game that is seriously f***ed up, where you just slaughtered motherf****rs like in Smash TV. It was brutal. Loaded! That shit is cool. It's nasty body parts and all this shit flying and splattered everywhere. Shit, another really cool one was Final Fantasy VII. I played that one like a motherf***er. I played it straight one time for 18 hours. [Laughs] It was horrible. It was the second day I was playing it and I was home alone. I sat down in front of my big screen, got a pizza and I only got up to piss or shit. [Laughs] That game is a f***n' movie. There was so much to it, it completely amazed me. And I didn't even get through the first disk! It's incredible.*

As the night stretched into the wee hours, we powered up some PS2 launch titles and the following are Davis' first impressions:

SSX

SSX is by far the best snowboarding game I have ever played. I've played Cool Boarders and stuff like that, and I thought that was the shit, when it first came out. Actually I played the European version. I like SSX. It has cool effects, and you can do all kinds of crazy shit. Learning all the crazy tricks is pretty cool. I like the way the characters are set up too. You can adjust and change each one, and you can actually see them talk, which adds personality to each one.

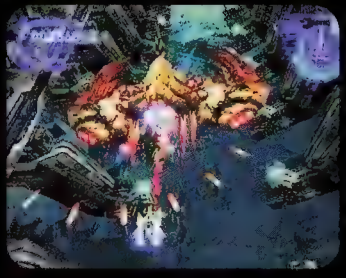


silpheed

I like this one because it reminds me of the old school shooter games like Galaga and Raiden. Shit just droppin' down on you, only now you have these killer backdrops and insect- like enemies or something. It doesn't have the typical shooter look.

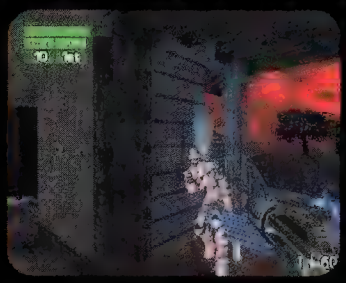
GR: Do these type of games still interest you?

Yeah, they still do. If the game were any less than this, I wouldn't take it. But you can choose different weapons you want and it affects the way you go through a level and I like that.



time splitters

This game is f***n' cool, but the controls suck. It is hard to control, and I just didn't like that about the game. You've got one analog to move back and forth and the other to turn you, and I just don't like it. It sucks.



GR: Are you more comfortable in first-person or do you prefer third person games?
Third-person. I've always liked third-person better.

tekken tag tournament

(Unfortunately we couldn't get Tekken to boot up, so we ended up just discussing fighting games.)

I like fighters, when it's against someone else. Fighting the computer sucks. I like Ready 2 Rumble, but until I got the Dreamcast I really only played PC and Mac games. I also love arcade games.

gungriffon

GR: How do you feel about this one?

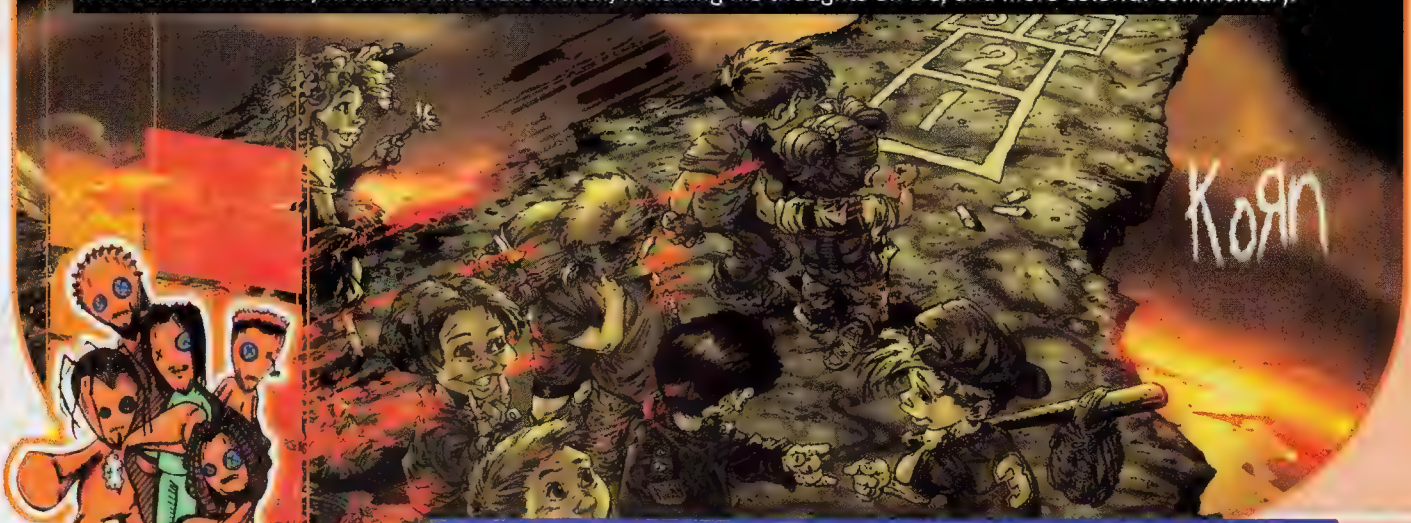
Well, it's not for me.

GR: Is it the controls, graphics or just everything?
Some people will like it, but it was just boring to me. Maybe if I played it more I'd start to like it, but right off the bat it sucks. Controls are fine, though.

moto gp

This is cool too, but it's just a motorcycle game. I don't like these games unless I can f*** up the other bikes. It's just not fun, you know what I mean. I want destruction, and here you just race. For other people, this is probably good, but me...I like to watch shit blow up.

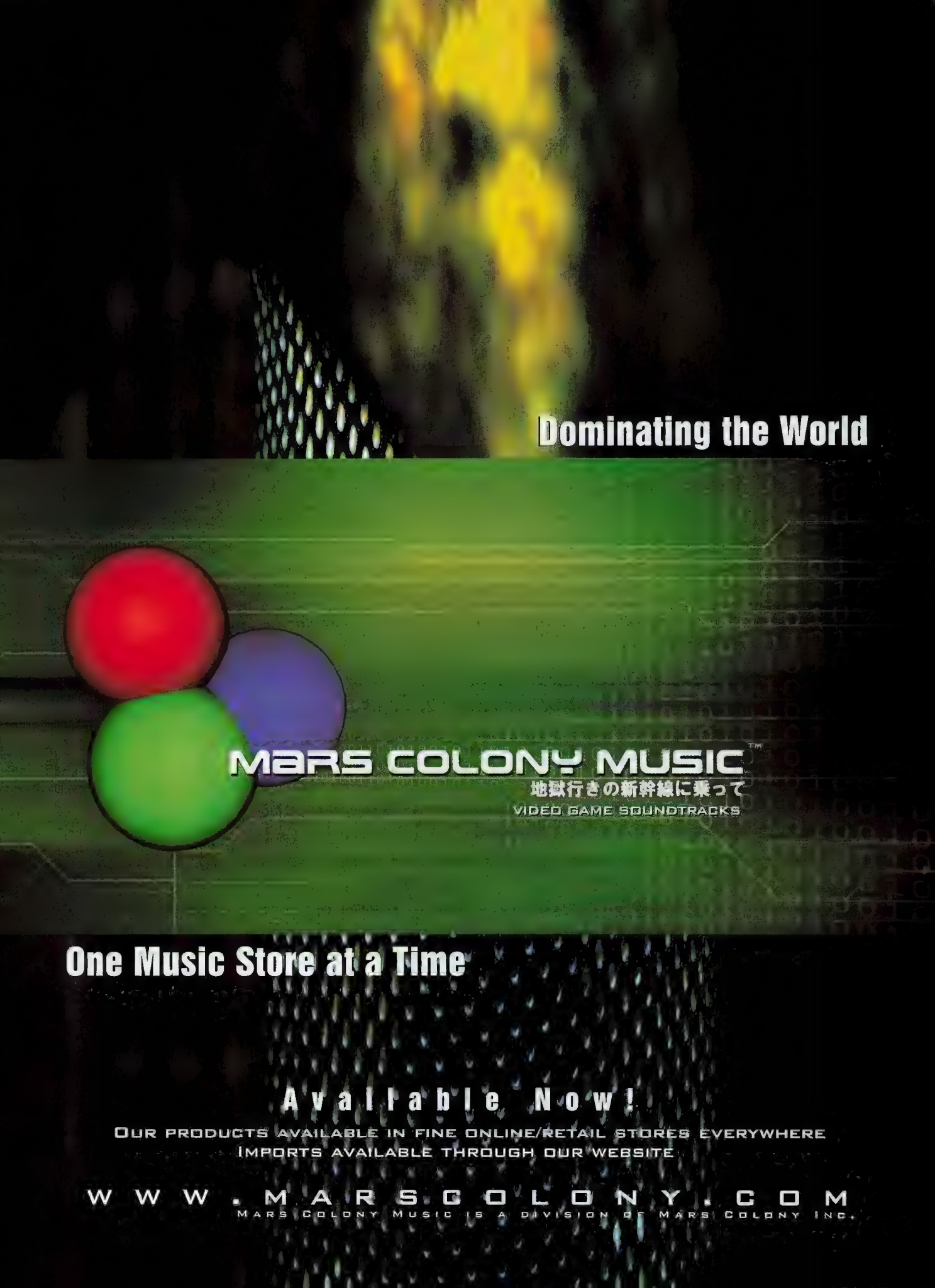
We'll have more with Jonathan Davis next month, including his thoughts on DC, and more colorful commentary.



Audiophiles

D. Halverson	B. Fiechter	M. Hobbs	T. Stratton	Pooch
1. *VAST* music for people	1. *RADIOHEAD* kid a	1. *RADIOHEAD* kid a	1. *PRIMAL SCREAM* vanishing point	1. *CYPRESS HILL* skull & bones
2. *PRINCESS MONONOKE* soundtrack	2. *PHILIP GLASS* symphony no. 5	2. *PHILIP GLASS* symphony no. 5	2. *DELTRON 3030* deltron 3030	2. *DR. DRE* chronic 2001
3. *BT* movement in still life	3. *DAR WILLIAMS* the green world	3. *UNDERWORLD* everything, everything	3. *OUTKAST* stankonia	3. *FATBOY SLIM* norman cook collection
4. *FULL DEVIL JACKET* debut	4. *AMY CORREIA* carnival love	4. *MADONNA* music	4. *BOWDRY CANYON* soundtrack	4. *SADE* diamond life
5. *RADIO HEAD* kid a	5. *BJORK* selma songs	5. *PAUL VAN DYK* out there and back	5. *PERFORMANCE* soundtrack	5. *PINK FLOYD* wish you were here

S. Akkinuso	C. Hoffman	H. Pan	B. Elmquist	N. Lui
1. *BEN HARPER* burn to shine	1. *THE MINIBOSSES* the minibosses	1. *DJ DOBOY* Volume #13	1. *LINKIN PARK* hybrid theory	1. *DJ LARS HOLTE* in trance we trust
2. *THE ROOTS* things fall apart	2. *NOBOU UEMATSU* final fantasy 8 piano coll.	2. *PUAL VAN DYKE* Out there and Back	2. *DISTURBED* the sickness	2. *DJ TIESTO* search of sunrise
3. *EMINEM* the marshall mathers lp	3. *MADONNA* music	3. *BT* ESCM	3. *RUSH* hemispheres	3. *BUBBLEGUM CRISIS* complete vocal collection
4. *BLACKSTAR* blackstar	4. *YASUNORI MITSUDA & MILLENNIAL FAIR:* creid	4. *GATECRASHER* GLOBAL SOUND SYSTEM	4. *SOULFLY* the primative	4. *SABER MARIONETTE* vocal best
5. *AMEL LARRIEUX* infinite possibilities	5. *CADILLAC ANGELS* live	5. *EURPHORIA* IBIZA	5. *GODSMACK* awake	5. *VARIOUS ARTISTS* dream dance vol. 15


Dominating the World
MARS COLONY MUSIC™
地獄行きの新幹線に乗って
VIDEO GAME SOUNDTRACKS
One Music Store at a Time
Available Now!
Our products available in fine online/retail stores everywhere
Imports available through our website
WWW.MARSCOLONY.COM
Mars Colony Music is a division of Mars Colony Inc.

CARTMART

"The Video Gamers Pro-Shop"

Be Sure To Check Out Our New Web Site!

WWW.CART-MART.COM

BUY SELL NEW USED DOMESTIC IMPORT

SONY SATURN N64 DREAMCAST SNES GENESIS NES

VIDEO GAMES

ANIME/VIDEOGAME MERCHANDISE

CD MUSIC SOUNDTRACKS . ARTBOOKS

TOYS . MODELS . WALLSCROLLS

NEW TURBO DUO
NEW TURBO EXPRESS
NEW TURBO GRAFX-16

Metal Slug 2 . Dead or Alive 2 . Shenmue . Syphon Filter 2 . Virtual On 2 . Vagrant Story . Perfect Dark . Pokemon Stadium . Sega GT . Code Veronica . Coming Soon Turbo 16/Duo, Neo Geo CD . Playstation 2 . Tekken Tag . Ridge Racer V . Anime Collectibles! Evangelion . Dragonball Z . Sailormoon . X . Gundam . Import Pokemon Cards . FF8 Guardian Force Series 2 . FF8 Collectibles, soundtracks, action figures, wallscrolls, plush toys, keychains

"GET IT FROM THE PEOPLE WHO PLAY THE GAMES!"

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL MERCHANDISE ON THE WEB

Cart-Mart
2129 Wiley Blvd S.W.
CedarRapids, IA 52404
(319)396-3046

Illustrated by Long Vo
http://scroll.syste.ms
SYNC is copyright 1997-2000 Long Vo and Scroll Productions

advertiser index

ADV Films 115
www.advfilms.com

Anime Nation 111
www.animenation.com

Bandai Amierica 51
www.bandai-ent.com

Bandai Entertainment 108-109
www.bandai-ent.com

Blue Box Toys 119
www.blueboxtoys.com

Capcom 60-61,136-IBC
www.capcom.com

Cart-Mart 134
www.cart-mart.com

Centerseat 105
www.centerseat.com

Central Park Media 107
www.centralparkmedia.com

Enix 3
www.enix.com

Game Express 125
www.gameexpress.com

Gathering of Developers 17
www.godgames.com

Japan Video Games 127
www.japanvideogames.com

Mars Colony Music 133
www.marscolonymusic.com

Nintendo 4-5
www.nintendo.com

Palisades Marketing 121
www.palisadesmarketing.com

Pioneer 113
www.pioneeranimation.com

Rockstar 36-37,45,48-49
www.rockstar.com

Sega IFC-1,21-23,30-31,BC
www.sega.com

Titus 29
www.titus.com

Toycom 123
www.toycom.com

Ubi Soft 40-41,56-57
www.ubisoft.com

Working Designs 9,11,13-15
www.workingdesigns.com

COMING NEXT MONTH

SKIES OF ARCADIA

GR

January 2001

The Dreamcast role-playing third party have officially arrived! After Grandia II and Shenmue, both unforgettable in their own right, and Active on get in Phantasy Star Online, members of Sega's original Phantasy Star team will blow us with Skies of Arcadia—a truly remarkable RPG that encompasses all that is sacred about the genre. With epic storytelling brought to life by expressive characters, excellent artistry, and an amazing universe in the sky, Skies of Arcadia is destined to reignite the spark that Phantasy Star started in Sega fans the world over. We'll also have part two of our Microsoft story and our visit with Jonathan Davis. Don't miss it! On newsstands everywhere December 26.

issue

32

number thirty two

TAKING HELL TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

© CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2000 © CAPCOM U.S.A., INC. 2000. All Rights Reserved. A Todd McFarlane Entertainment, Inc. Production. SPAWN, its logo, symbol, characters, and all related characters are registered trademarks of Todd McFarlane Productions, Inc. © 2000. All Rights Reserved. CAPCOM and the CAPCOM logo are registered trademarks of CAPCOM CO., LTD. CAPCOM EDGE is a trademark of CAPCOM CO., LTD. Sega, Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Enterprises, LTD. All Rights Reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other marks are the property of their respective holders.

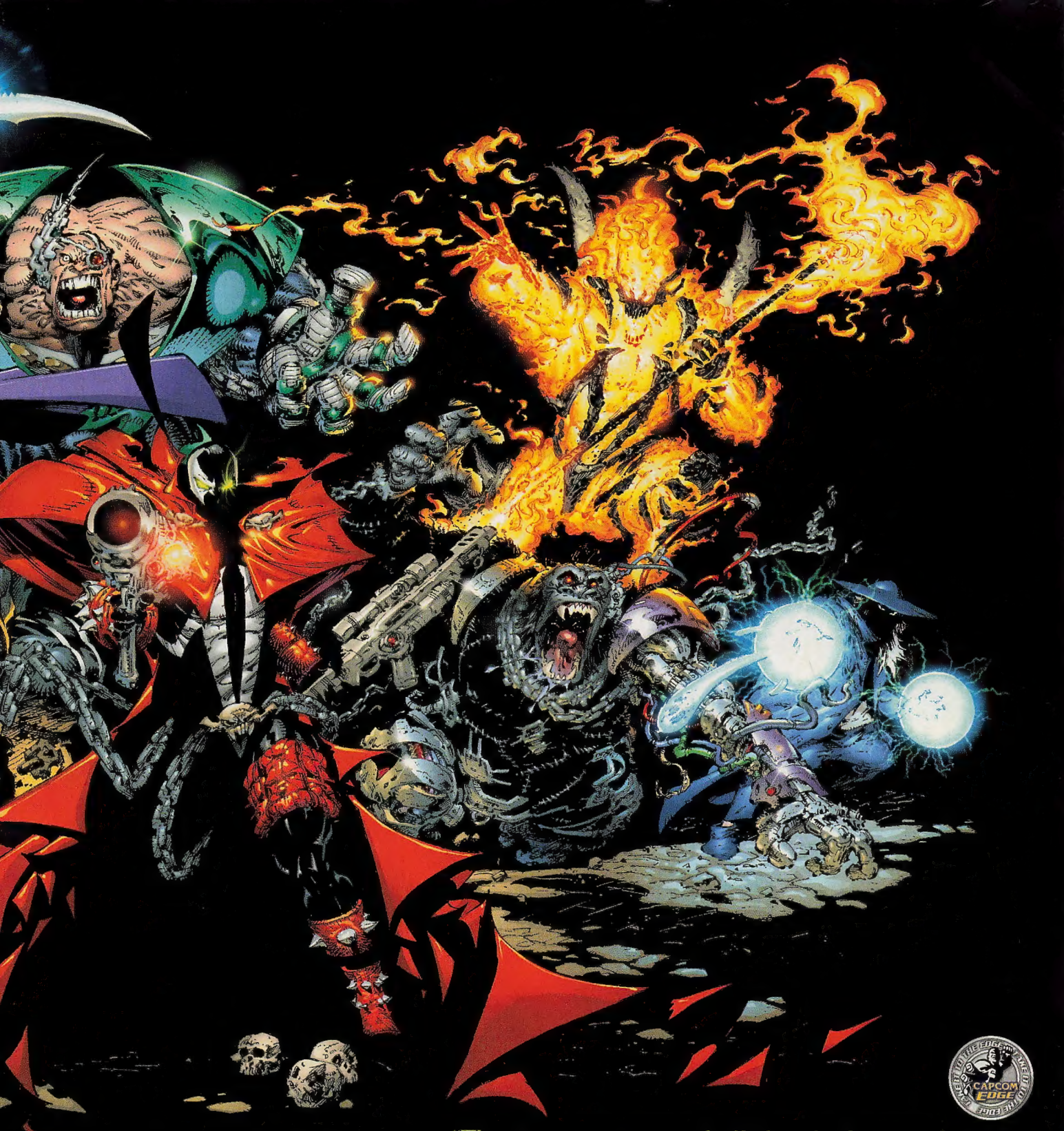
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood
Animated Violence

Dreamcast™

CAPCOM
CAPCOM.COM

TODD McFARLANE ENTERTAINMENT
SPAWN.COM



"The true essence of all that is Spawn." –Gameweek

–Todd McFarlane's blockbuster comic book characters come to life on Sega Dreamcast

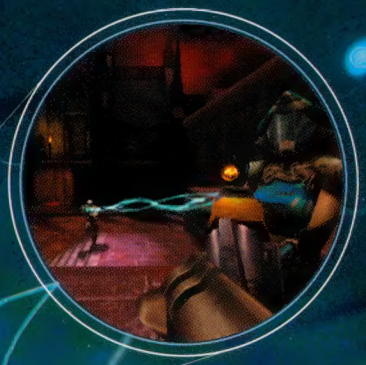
–Compete in the four-player simultaneous Battle Royal mode

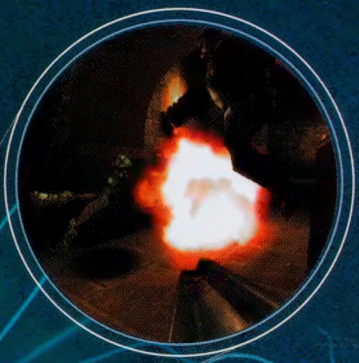
–Includes the original Arcade Mode and tournament style Dreamcast Mode

–All your favorite characters from the Spawn series are faithfully recreated in the ultimate death match challenge

COME ONE, COME ALL.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE YOU WERE INVOLVED IN A FREE-FOR-ALL OF THIS MAGNITUDE. QUAKE III ARENA ON SEGA DREAMCAST IS A PRIMAL STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL WHERE THE FIT BECOME CHAMPIONS AND THE UNFIT BECOME STAINS. PRACTICING ALONE CAN ONLY TAKE YOU SO FAR. IF YOU'RE READY TO TRY YOUR CHARM ON OTHERS, TRY A CASUAL ONE-NIGHTER IN THE ARENA. YOU NEVER KNEW IT COULD BE LIKE THIS.





Quake III Arena® ©1999-2000 id Software, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Quake III Arena® for the Sega Dreamcast developed by Raster Productions LLC. Published and distributed by Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc. under license from id Software, Inc. Quake III Arena®, Quake® and the id® logo are registered trademarks of id Software, Inc. Dreamcast™ and the "DC" logo are trademarks of Sega of America Dreamcast, Inc. Raster Productions™ is a trademark of Raster Productions. Sega® is a registered U.S. Trademark. Sega, Dreamcast and the Dreamcast logo are trademarks of SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD. © 2000 SEGA ENTERPRISES, LTD. All Rights Reserved.

QUAKE III ARENA

Dreamcast™

id

RASTER PRODUCTIONS

ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER

MATURE 17+ M

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence

MAGNIFICATION 800X

Made with love by

Our goal is to preserve classic video game magazines so that they are not lost permanently.

People interested in helping out in any capacity, please visit us at retromags.com.

No profit is made from these scans, nor do we offer anything available from the publishers themselves.

If you come across anyone selling releases from this site, please do not support them and do let us know.

Thank you!